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A  
CRITICAL and PHILOSOPHICAL  
COMMENTARY  
ON  
Mr. POPE's  
ESSAY ON MAN.

In which is contain'd  
A VINDICATION of the said Essay  
From the MISREPRESENTATIONS of  
Mr. DE RESNEL, the *French Translator*,  
AND OF  
Mr. DE CROUSAZ,  
Professor of Philosophy and Mathematics in the  
Academy of *Lausanne*, the COMMENTATOR.

---

By Mr. WARBURTON.

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*Vide quam iniqui sunt divinatorum munerum aestimatores etiam quidam PROFESSI SAPIENTIAM. Sen.*

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TO MY  
WORTHY FRIEND  
RALPH ALLEN, *Esq;*

SIR,

I give myself the pleasure of conversing with you, in this Form; as I see you less under the Idea of a Patron, than of a joint Labourer with me in the Service of Mankind. For while I attempt to explain the Theory of this divine Philosophy of *Universal Benevolence*, you illustrate it by your Practice. At most therefore I can but offer you the ESSAY ON MAN, set in a just Light, as a Mirrour for your Cabinet; where you may behold the perfect Image of your own Mind: And the Works of this Artist, who is beholden only to *Truth* for their Polish and

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# iv DEDICATION.

their Lustre, you are too well acquainted with to suspect them of Flattery. To preserve the Lustre of this Mirrour was the sole Purpose of the following *Letters*. For the dull Breath of Malice had attempted to defile its Purity; and, by staining it with the black Imputation of *Fatalism*, to tarnish every Virtue it reflected.

It hath been observed in *Physics*, that Nature never gave an Excellence, but she at the same time produced its contrary, with Qualities peculiarly adapted to its Destruction. As we see how this serves the wise Ends of Providence, by keeping us in that State of *Imperfection* and *Dependence* in which it hath pleased the Author of all Things to place us, we need not be much surprised to find the same Phænomenon in the *moral World*: In no Instance more apparent than in the *Doctrine of FATE*, which, almost coæval with the *Practice of VIRTUE*, is yet altogether the Destruction of it.

But

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But as there is not that Decay, nor Degeneracy of *Good*, in the *natural* as in the *moral World*; so neither is there that Increase of *Evil*. I say this chiefly with regard to the *Doctrine of Fate*, which hath been still growing, from Age to Age, in Absurdity and Impiety: And therefore no Wonder, that *Virtue*, whose specific Bane it is, should proportionably sicken and decline.

Indeed, it stopped not till it became like the *Tree* in the *Chaldæan's* Vision, which *reached to Heaven, and extended over the whole Earth*; and *received all the irrational and impure Creation, Birds, Beasts, and Insects, to its Shade and Shelter*.

To consider *Fate* in its Growth and Progress, it divides itself into four principal Branches.

The *first* and earliest is that which arose from the strange and prodigious Events in the Life of Man: Where the amazed Beholder observing the Ends of human Wisdom so perpetually defeated, even when supported by the

A 3      likeliest

## vi DEDICATION.

likeliest Means, concluded that nothing less than an over-ruling *Fate* had traversed his well-conducted Designs. This early Conclusion concerning God's Government *here*, from Observations on *Civil* Events, was again inferred in After-ages, by another Set of Men, with regard to his Government *hereafter*, from their Contemplations on *Religious*; while, from an utter Inability to penetrate the Designs of Providence in its partial Revelations to Mankind, they concluded that *Fate* or *Predestination* had determined of our future, as well as present Happiness. These, which are only different Modifications of the same imaginary Power, may be called the POPULAR and RELIGIOUS *Fate*.

The *second* kind arose from a supposed moral Influence of the *heavenly Bodies*; founded In an early Superstition that the *Hero-Gods* had migrated into *Stars*. It was first understood to be confined to *Communities*, as such  
were

## D E D I C A T I O N. vii

were the more immediate Care of these *Heroes* while living: But the same Considerations which produced the first Species of *Fate*, in a little time, extended it to *Particulars*. And this is the CIVIL or ASTROLOGIC *Fate*. Hitherto, *Free-will* was only curbed, or rendered useless. To annihilate it quite, needed all the Power of *Philosophy*. So true is the Observation, that without *Philosophy* Man can hardly become either thoroughly absurd or miserable.

The *Sophist*, in his profound Inquiries into human Nature, and on what it is ~~We~~ do, when we judge, deliberate, and resolve, came at length to this Short Conclusion, *That the Mind is no more than a Machine, and that its Operations are determined in the same Manner that a Ballance is inclined by its Weights*. This absolute Necessity of Man's Actions is the *third* Species of *Fate*, called the PHILOSOPHIC.

From this, to the *last*, that is to say, the Necessity of God's, was an easy

A 4                      Step.

## viii DEDICATION.

Step. For when, from the very Nature of *Mind* and *Will*, the *Philosopher* had demonstrated the Absurdity of Freedom in Man, the same Conclusion would hold as to all other Beings whatsoever. And this is the ATHEISTIC *Fate*.

These, Sir, were the glorious Effects of PRIDE: which our incomparable Friend, with so good Reason, esteems the Source of all our Misery and Impiety. The *Pride* of accounting for the *Ways of Providence* begot the two first Species; and the *Pride* of comprehending the *Essences of Things*, the two latter. *Ab! misera mens hominum, quo te FATA sæpissime trahunt!* In the Name of *Paul*, if one might be allowed to ask, *What shall deliver us from the Body of this Fate?* which hangs about the Soul like that Punishment of the ancient Tyrant, who bound *dead Bodies* to the living. I answer, the *Religion* of *JESUS*: which hath instructed us as clearly in the  
the

**DEDICATION.** *ix*  
the Nature of *Man*, as in the Nature of *God*; in the *Subject*, as well as in the *Object*, of Worship. A *Worship* founded, as Reason and Conscience tell us it ought, on these two great Principles, the **FREEDOM** and the **WEAKNESS** of *Man*. The first, making our Approach to God a **REASONABLE SERVICE**; the latter, God's Approach to us a **COVENANT OF GRACE**. And this, Sir, is that *glorious Gospel*, which you are not ashamed to adore, as able to *put to Silence the Ignorance of foolish Men*.

And, in fact, the *fashionable* Reasoner is now gone over to the Cause of *Liberty*; but still true to his overweening *Pride*, is gone over—in the other Extreme. Let the Fatalist talk what he pleases of the Mind's being a *Ballance*; if its Operations be mechanical, I am sure it is more like a *Pendulum*, which, when well leaded, is incessantly swinging from one side to the other. For the vain Reasoner is now as much disposed to deny the *Weakness* of the  
Mind,

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Mind, as before to deny its *Freedom*. Hence it is, we see the *Christian Doctrine* of GRACE despised and laughed at; and the Means instituted by its Founder for obtaining it, as impiously as sophistically, explained away. Yet without human *Freedom* Religion in *general* is a Farce; and but on the Truth of human *Weakness*, the Religion of *Jesus*, a Falsehood.

With regard then to *Free-will*, what need we more than the Declaration of *Religion*? The simple-minded Man naturally supposes it; the good Man feels it; the thinking Man understands it; and nothing but vain *Philosophy* holds out both against *Nature* and *Grace*: Not so openly indeed as formerly; but still as obstinately. The ablest Advocates of *Necessity* now enveloping it in *Systems*; and insinuating it in all the artful Detours of what they call a *sufficient Reason*.

None have gone farther, or with more Success, into this Contrivance than the famous *Leibnitz*; who with  
great



## D E D I C A T I O N.    xi

great Parts and Application of Mind, had an immoderate Ambition of becoming Founder of a Sect. He first attempted to raise a Name, like the Heroes of old, by the Invasion of another's Property: But being detected and repulsed, he turned himself to *Invention*; and framed an *Hypothesis* in direct Opposition to that *Theory* which he before seemed willing to have made his own. This *Hypothesis*, founded in a refined *Fatalism*, he chose to deliver by Hints only, and in piece-meal; which, at the same time that it gave his Scheme an Air of Depth and Mystery, kept its Absurdities from being observed. So that it soon made its Fortune amongst the *German* Wits; who were not out of their way when they took the same deep and cloudy Road with their Master. It was no Wonder then, that this should raise a Jealousy in the Advocates of Religion, and make the warmer sort of them (not the best at a charitable Distinction, tho' great Logi-

## xii DEDICATION.

Logicians) to mistake their Friends for their Enemies.

Amongst other *Follies* of this kind, it brought down a Storm of Calumny on the *ESSAY ON MAN*; and, in its Turn, occasioned this *Vindication* of our inimitable Poet. A short, and an easy Task. For my Point, you know, Sir, was not to expose the *Absurdity* of *Fate*; but to prove the *Essay* free from a Doctrine, which my Adversary and I agreed to be an *Absurdity*. But if any one, confiding in the Tricks of Sophistry under the cloudy Conveyance of Metaphysics, would dispute this Point with us; I shall give up my Share of him to my Adversary, and leave him entirely to the Mercy of his *Logic*. All the Answer he must expect from me, is of that kind with the Philosopher's, who disputing with one who denied local Motion, only used his Legs, and walked out of his Company: That is to say, I shall decline his Challenge merely for the Exercise of my Freedom. And indeed,

deed what other Answer does he deserve, who refuses to acquiesce in that CONSCIOUSNESS of *Freedom* which every plain Man has, on reflecting upon what passes in his Mind when he thinks and acts?

But yet, it may be worth while to remark the Nature of this *Consciousness*; from which alone (as I think, Sir, I have had the Pleasure to observe to you in our Conversation on these Subjects) *Freedom of Will* may be demonstrated to all but the downright Atheist. It will, I suppose, be allowed to be an Impression on the Mind, made by *Reflection*, as strong as any of those made by *Sensation*. And sure he must be as blind as even blind Fate can make him, who does not see thus far at least. So that the only question is, whether it be, like them, subject to Deception? I answer, No. And first, for a *natural* Reason, As the Organs of Sense are not employed to convey the Intelligence: But secondly and principally, for a *moral*

## xiv DEDICATION.

*ral* one, As there would be nothing left to redress the wrong Representation. For, *Reason*, which performs this Office in the false *Impressions of Sense*, is the very Faculty employed in making the *Impressions of Reflexion*. Were these therefore liable to the same Kind of Deception, we should be unavoidably led into and kept in Error by the natural Frame and Constitution of Things. But as this would reflect on the Author of Nature, no Theist, I presume, will be inclined to admit the Consequence. If the *Fatalist* should reply, that *Reason*, when well *exercised* and *refined*, does here, as in the false *Impressions of Sense*, lay open the Delusion; this, I must tell him, is the very *Folly* we complain of: That, when Things are submitted to the Arbitrement of *Reason*, her Award should be rejected while standing in the Road of *Nature*, with all her Powers and Faculties entire; and not thought worthy to be heard, till made giddy in the airy Heights of *Metaphysics*,

## D E D I C A T I O N. xv

*taphysics*, and racked and tortured by all the Engines of Sophistry: In a word, when *Reason* is no more herself; but speaks as her *Keepers* and *Tormentors* dictate.

However, it is not the looking *within* only, that assures the Theist of his *Freedom*. What he may observe *abroad* of the horrid Mischiefs and Absurdities arising from the *Doctrine of Fate*, will fully convince him of this Truth. It subverts and annihilates *all Religion*: For the Belief of Rewards and Punishments, without which *no Religion* can subsist, is founded on the Principle of Man's being an *accountable Creature*; but when *Freedom of Will* is wanting, Man is no more so than a Clock or Organ. It is likewise highly injurious to *Society*: For whoever thinks himself no longer in his own Power, will be naturally inclined to give the Reins to his Passions, as it is submitting to that *Fate* which must at last absolutely turn and direct them.

But

## xvi DEDICATION.

But after all, the most powerful Argument for *Freedom*, I confess, Sir, is such a *Life* as yours. Of which, tho' I could say much, and with Pleasure, I will only say, that it has made me, in common with every one who knows you,

*Your obliged,*

*Your affectionate, and*

*Your faithful Servant,*

May 18, 1742.

W. WARBURTON.

# P R E F A C E.

**T**HERE are two sorts of Writers, I mean the BIGOT and the FREE-THINKER, that every honest Man in his Heart esteems no better than the Pests of Society; as they are manifestly the Bane of *Literature*, and *Religion*. And whoever effectually endeavours to serve either of These, is sure immediately to offend both of Those. For, the Advancement of Literature is as favourable to true Piety, as it is fatal to *Superstition*; and the Advancement of Religion as propitious to real Knowledge as discrediting to *vain Science*.

The Author of the following *Letters*, who hath aimed at least to do this Service, by his Writings, regarding these two sorts of Men, as the irreconcilable Enemies of his design, began without any Ceremony (for he was not disposed, for their Sake, to go about) to break through those lumpish impediments they had thrown across the Road of Truth; and labour'd to clear the

a

way

way, not only for himself, but for all who were disposed to follow him. In which it fared with him as it sometimes happens to those who undertake to remove a public Nuisance for the Benefit of their Neighbourhood, where the nicer Noses hold themselves offended even in the Service thus undeservedly rendered to them. For notwithstanding our Author hath taken all Opportunities, and even *sought out* Occasions to celebrate every Writer, living or dead, who was any way respectable for Knowledge, Virtue, or Piety, in whatever Party, Sect, or Religion he was found, especially such as he had the Misfortune to dissent from, and this sometimes with so liberal a hand as to give offence on that side likewise; tho' he hath done this, I say, yet having, for the Reasons above, declared eternal War with *Bigotry* and *Free-thinking*, the strong, yet sincere Colours in which he hath drawn the Learning, Sense, Candour, and Truth of those Subjects in which these noble Qualities are most eminent, have been censured as Insolence and Satire, and a Transgression of all the bounds of Civility and Decorum. But  
he.



he will not be easily induced, by the Clamours of the falsely Delicate, to betray the Interests of all that is good and valuable amongst Men, in complaisance to their Notions of Politeness. 'Tis no time to stand upon ceremony when Religion is struggling for Life; when *the whole Head is sick, and the whole Heart faint.*

The *Bigot*, who between a corrupt Will, and a narrow Understanding, imputes odious Designs to his Adversaries, and impious Consequences to their Opinions, is not, I suppose, to be *complimented*, either into Sense or Honesty. The Writer here confuted is amongst the chief of them. And it is not impossible but the recent Memory of the like Usage our Author himself met with from others of the same leaven, might give him a quicker Sense and stronger Repentment of the Injury done his Neighbour.

As for the Tribe of *Free-thinkers*, *Toland*, *Tindal*, *Collins*, *Coward*, *Blount*, *Strutt*, *Chub*, *Dudgeon*, *Morgan*, *Tillard*, and their Fellows, the mortal Foes both of Reason and Religion, injured *Wit* as well as *Virtue*, by the Mouth of their happiest Advocate  
and

and Favourite, long ago called out for *Vengeance* on them :

— The Licence of a following Reign  
Did all the Dregs of bold *Socinus* drain ;  
Then unbelieving Priests reform'd the Na-  
tion,  
And taught more pleasant Methods of Sal-  
vation ;  
Where Heav'n's free Subjects might their  
Rights dispute,  
Left God himself should seem too absolute.  
Encourag'd thus, Wit's Titans brav'd the  
Skies,  
And the Press groan'd with licens'd Blaf-  
phemies.  
*These Monsters, Critics, with your Darts en-  
gage,  
Here point your Thunder, and exhaust your  
Rage!*

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A  
COMMENTARY  
ON  
Mr. *Pope's* ESSAY ON MAN.

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LETTER I.

**W**HEN a great Genius, whose Writings have afforded the World much Pleasure and Instruction, happens to be enviously attack'd and falsely accused, it is natural to think, that a Sense of Gratitude due from Readers so agreeably obliged, or a Sense of that Honour resulting to our Country from such a Writer, should raise a general Indignation. But every Day's Experience shews us the very contrary. Some take a malignant Satisfaction in the Attack; others, a foolish Pleasure in a literary Conflict; and the greater Part look on with an absolute Indifference.

B

Mr.

Mr. *De Croufaz's* Remarks \* on Mr. *Pope's Essay on Man*, seen in part, thro' the deceitful Medium of a *French* Translation, have just fallen into my Hands. As those Remarks appear to me very groundless and unjust, I thought so much due to Truth, as to vindicate our Great Countryman from his Censure.

The principal Object therefore of this Vindication shall be, to give the Reader a fair and just Idea of the *Reasoning* of that *Essay*, so egregiously misrepresented; in which I shall not consider it as a *Poem* (for it stands in no need of the Licence of such kind of Works to defend it) but as a *System of Philosophy*; and content myself with a plain Representation of the Sobriety, Force, and Connection of *that Reasoning*.

I shall begin with the first Epistle. The opening of which, in *fifteen* Lines, is taken up in giving an Account of his Subject; which he shews us (agreeably to the Title) is AN ESSAY ON MAN, or a Philosophical Inquiry into his *Nature*, and *End*, his *Passions*, and *Pursuits*:

A mighty Maze! — but not without a Plan, as Mr. *De Croufaz* and I have found it, between us. The next Line tells us with what Design he wrote, *viz.*

To vindicate the Ways of God to Man.

\* They are contained in two several Books, the one intitled *Examen de l'Essai de Mr. Pope*. A Lausanne, 1737. The other, *Commentaire sur la Traduction en vers de M. l'Abbe Du Resnel de l'Essai de Mr. Pope sur l'Homme*. A Geneve, 1738.

The

The Men he writes against he hath frequently informed us are such, as

Weigh their Opinion against Providence.

l. 110

Such as

— cry, if Man's unhappy, God's unjust.

l. 114.

Such as fall into the Notion,

That Vice and Virtue there is none at all.

Ep. ii. l. 202.

This occasioneth the Poet to divide his *Vindication of the Ways of God*, into two Parts. In the *first* of which he gives *direct* Answers to those Objections which libertine Men, on a View of the Disorders arising from the Perversity of the human Will, have intended against Providence: And, in the *second*, he *obviates* all those Objections, by a true Delineation of human Nature, or a *general* but exact *Map of Man*; which these Objectors either not knowing, or mistaking, or else leaving (for the mad Pursuit of *metaphysical Entities*) have lost and bewildered themselves in a thousand foolish Complaints against Providence. The *first Epistle* is employed in the Management of the *first* part of this Dispute; and the *three* following in the Management of the *second*. So that the whole constitutes a complete *Essay on Man*, written for the best Purpose, *to vindicate the Ways of God*.

The Poet therefore having enounced his *Subject*, his *End of Writing*, and the *Quality of his Ad-*

B 2

*versaries,*

#### 4 A COMMENTARY on

*versaries*, proceeds [from l. 16 to 23.] to instruct us *from whence* he intends to draw his Arguments for their Confutation; namely, from the *visible Things* of God, in this System, to demonstrate the *invisible Things* of God, his *eternal Power and Godhead*: And *why*; because we can *reason only from what we know*, and we *know* no more of *Man* than what we see of his Station here; no more of *God* than what we see of his Dispensations to Man in this Station; therefore

Thro' Worlds unnumber'd tho' the God be known,  
'Tis ours to trace him only in our own <sup>b</sup>.

This naturally leads the Poet to exprobrate the miserable Folly and Impiety of pretending to pry into, and call in question the profound Dispensations of Providence: Which reproof contains [from l. 22 to 43] the most sublime Description of the Omniscience of God, and the miserable Blindness and Presumption of Man.

Presumptuous Man! the Reason wouldst thou find  
Why form'd so weak, so little, and so blind?  
First, if thou canst, the harder Reason guess  
Why form'd no weaker, blinder, and no less?  
Ask of thy Mother Earth, why Oaks are made,  
Taller or stronger than the Weeds they shade?  
Or ask of yonder argent Fields above,  
Why *Jove's* Satellites are less than *Jove*?

<sup>b</sup> Hunc cognoscimus solummodo per Proprietates suas et Attributa, et per sapientissimas et optimas rerum structuras et causas finales. *Newtoni Principia Schol. gener. sub finem.* In

In the four last Lines, the Poet has joined the utmost Beauty of Argumentation to the Sublimity of Thought; where the similar Instances, proposed for their Examination, shew as well the *Absurdity* of their Complaints against Order, as the *Fruitlessness* of their Enquiries into the Arcana of the Godhead.

So far his modest and sober *Introduction*: In which he truly observes, that no Wisdom less than omniscient

Can tell why Heav'n has made us as we are.

Yet tho' we can never discover the *particular* Reasons for this Mode of our Existence, we may be assured in *general* that it is *right*: For now entering upon his Argument, he lays down this self-evident Proposition as the Foundation of his *Thesis*, which he reasonably supposes will be allowed him: *That of all possible Systems, infinite Wisdom hath formed the best*; [l. 43, 44.] From hence he draws two Consequences,

1. The *first* [from l. 44 to 51.] is, that as the best System cannot but be such a one as hath no inconnected Void; such a one in which there is a perfect Coherence and gradual Subordination in all its Parts; there must needs be, in some part or other of the Scale of Life and Sense, such a Creature as MAN; which reduces the Dispute to this absurd Question, *Whether God has placed him wrong?*

It being shewn that MAN, the Subject of his  
B 3 Inquiry,

## 6 A COMMENTARY on

*Inquiry*, has a necessary Place in such a System as this is confessed to be: And it being evident that the Abuse of Free-will, from whence proceeds all moral Evil, is the certain Effect of such a Creature's Existence; the next Question will be, how these Evils can be accounted for, consistently with the Idea we have of God's Attributes? Therefore,

2. The *second* Consequence he draws from his Principle, *That of all possible Systems, infinite Wisdom has form'd the best*, is, that whatever is wrong in our private System, is right, as relative to the whole [l. 50 to 53.]

Respecting Man, whatever wrong we call,  
*May, must* be right, as relative to ALL.

That it *may*, he proves [from l. 52 to 61.] by shewing in what consists the Difference between the *systematic* Works of God and those of Man, *viz.* that, in the *latter*, a thousand Movements scarce gain one Purpose; in the *former* one Movement gains many Purposes. So that

—Man, who here seems *principal* alone,  
Perhaps acts *second* to some Sphere unknown.

And *acting thus*, the Appearances of *wrong* in the *particular* System may be *right* in the *universal*:  
For,

'Tis but a Part we see, and not a Whole.

—That it *must*, the whole body of this Epistle is employed to illustrate and inforce. Thus *partial Evil is universal Good*, and thus Providence is fairly acquitted.

From



From all this he draws a general Conclusion [from l. 60 to 87.] that, as what had been said is sufficient to vindicate the Ways of Providence, Man should rest submissive and content, and confess every Thing to be disposed for the best; that to pretend to inquire into the Manner how God conducts this wonderful Scheme to its Completion, is as absurd as to imagine that the Horse and Ox shall ever come to comprehend why they undergo such different *Manage* and *Fortunes* in the Hand of Man; nay, that such Knowledge, if communicated, would be even pernicious to Man, and make him neglect or *desert* his Duty here.

Heav'n from all Creatures hides the Book of Fate,  
All but the Page prescrib'd, the present State,  
From Brutes what Men, from Men what Spirits  
know,

*Or who would suffer Being here below?*

This he illustrates by an Instance in the Lamb, which is happy in not knowing the Fate that attends it from the Hand of the Butcher; and from thence takes occasion to observe, that God is the equal Master of all his Creatures, and provides for the proper Happiness of each Being.

Who sees with equal Eye, as God of all,  
A Hero perish, or a Sparrow fall.<sup>c</sup>

But now the Objector is suppos'd to put in, and say; "You tell us indeed, that all things will turn

<sup>c</sup> Mat. x. 29.

## 8 A COMMENTARY on

“ out for Good ; but we see ourselves surrounded  
 “ with present Evil ; and yet you forbid us all In-  
 “ quiry into the Manner how we are to be extri-  
 “ cated ; and in a Word, leave us in a very discon-  
 “ solate Condition.” Not so, replies the Poet  
 [from l. 86 to 95.] you may reasonably, if you so  
 please, receive much comfort from the HOPE of  
 a happy Futurity ; a *Hope* given us by God him-  
 self for this very Purpose, as an Earnest of that  
 Bliss, which *here* indeed perpetually flies us, but is  
 reserved for the good Man *hereafter*.

What future Bliss he gives not thee to know,  
 But gives that *Hope* to be thy Blessing now.

*Hope* springs eternal in the human Breast,  
 Man never *is*, but always *to be* blest.

The Soul uneasy, and confin'd from home  
 Rests and expatiates in a Life to come.

Now the Reason why the Poet chuses to insist on  
 this Proof of a future State in Preference to others,  
 I conceive is in order to give his System (which  
 is founded in a sublime and improved *Platonism*)  
 the utmost Grace of Uniformity. For we know  
 this HOPE was *Plato's* peculiar Argument for a fu-  
 ture State ; and the Words here employed, *The*  
*Soul uneasy*, &c. *his* peculiar Expression : We have  
 seen the Argument illustrated with great Force of  
 Reasoning, by our most eminent modern Divines :  
 But no where stronger urged than by our Poet, in  
 this *Essay*. He says here, in express Terms, That  
*God gave us Hope to supply that future Bliss which*  
*he*

he at present keeps hid from us. In his 2d Ep. l. 264. he goes still farther, and says, this HOPE quits us not even at Death, when every Thing mortal drops from us.

Hope travels thro', nor quits us when we die.

And, in the 4th Ep. he shews how the same HOPE is a certain Proof of a future State, from the Consideration of God's giving Man no Appetite in vain, or what he did not intend should be satisfied; (which is *Plato's* great Argument for a future State.) For, describing the Condition of the good Man, he breaks out into these rapturous Strains.

For him alone Hope leads from Gole to Gole,  
And opens still, and opens on his Soul;  
'Till, lengthen'd on to Faith, and unconfin'd,  
It pours the Blifs, that fills up all the Mind.  
He sees, why Nature plants in Man alone  
Hope of known Blifs, and Faith in Blifs unknown:  
Nature, whose Dictates to no other Kind  
Are giv'n in vain, but what they seek they find.

l. 331, & seq.

It is only for the good Man, he tells us, that Hope leads from Gole to Gole, &c. It would be strange indeed then, if it should be a Delusion.

But it hath been objected, that the *System of the best*, weakens the other natural Arguments for a future State, because if the evils, which good Men suffer, promote the Benefit of the whole, then every thing is here in order; and nothing amiss that

wants

wants to be set right: Nor has the good Man any reason to expect a Reparation, when the Evils he suffered had such a Tendency. To this we reply, that the *System of the best* is so far from weakening those natural Arguments, that it strengthens and supports them. To consider it a little, if those Evils to which good Men are subject be mere *Disorders*, without any Tendency to the greater Good of the Whole, then, tho' we must indeed conclude that they will hereafter be set right, yet this View of Things, representing God as suffering Disorders for no other Purpose than to set them right, gives us a very low Idea of the divine Wisdom. But if those Evils (according to the *System of the best*) contribute to the greater Perfection of the Whole, a Reason may be then given for their Permission, and such a one as supports our Idea of Divine Wisdom to the highest religious Purposes. Then, as to the good Man's *Hopes* of a Retribution, those still remain in their original Force. For our Idea of God's Justice, and how far that Justice is engaged to a Retribution, is exactly and invariably the same on either Hypothesis. For tho' the *System of the best* supposes that the *Evils themselves* will be fully compensated by the Good they produce to the *Whole*, yet this is so far from supposing that *Particulars* shall suffer for a *general Good*, that it is essential to *this System*, to conclude that, at the Completion of Things, when the whole is arrived to the State of utmost Perfection, *particular and universal Good shall coincide*.

Such

Mr. POPE's ESSAY ON MAN. II

Such is the WORLD's great Harmony, that springs  
From Union, Order, full Consent of Things ;  
Where *small* and *great*, where *weak* and *mighty*,  
made

To *serve* not *suffer*, *strengthen* not *invade*.

Ep. iii. l. 296, & seq.

Which Coincidence can never be without a retribution to good Men for the Evils suffered here below.

To return then to the Poet's Argument, he, as we said, bids Man comfort himself with Expectation of future Happiness, and shews him that this HOPE is an Earnest of it: But first of all puts in one very necessary Caution,

Hope *humblly* then, with *trembling* Pinions soar.

And provok'd at those Miscreants, whom he afterwards [Ep. 3. l. 262.] describes as building *Hell on Spite, and Heaven on Pride*, he upbraids them [from l. 94 to 109.] with the Example of the poor *Indian*, to whom also Nature hath given this *common* HOPE of *Mankind*. But tho' his untutor'd Mind had betray'd him into many childish Fancies concerning the Nature of that future State, yet he is so far from excluding any Part of his own Species (a Vice which could proceed only from vain Science, which *puffeth up*) that he humanely admits even *his faithful Dog to bear him Company*.

And then [from l. 108 to 119.] shews them, that Complaints against the *established Order of Things*, begin in the *highest Absurdity* from misapplied

## 12 A COMMENTARY on

plied *Reason* and *Power*, and end in the *highest Impiety*, in an Attempt to degrade the God of Heaven, and assume his Place.

Go wiser thou, and in thy Scale of Sense  
Weigh thy *Opinion* against *Providence* :  
*Destroy* all Creatures for thy Sport or Gust,  
Yet cry, if Man's *unhappy*, God's *unjust*;  
If Man alone ingross not Heav'n's high Care,  
Alone made *Perfect here, Immortal there*,

That is, be made God, *who only is Perfect and bath Immortality* : To which Sense the Lines immediately following confine us.

Snatch from his Hand the Ballance and the Rod,  
Rejudge his Justice, be the God of God.

From these Men, the Poet turns to his *Friend*, and [from l. 118 to 137.] remarks that the Ground of all this Extravagance is *Pride*; which, more or less, infects the whole Species:—shews the ill Effects of it, in the Case of the fallen Angels; and observes, that even *wishing* to invert the Laws of Order, is a lower Species of their Crime:—then brings an Instance of one of the Effects of Pride, which is the Folly of thinking every thing made *solely* for the Use of Man; without the least regard to any other of God's Creatures.

Ask for what End the heavenly Bodies shine,  
Earth for whose Use? PRIDE answers, 'Tis for  
*mine*.

For *me*, kind Nature wakes her genial Power,  
Suckles each Herb, and spreads out ev'ry Flower;  
Annual

Annual for *me*, the Grape, the Rose, renew  
 The Juice nectareous, and the balmy Dew;  
 For *me*, the Mine a thousand Treasures brings,  
 For *me*, Health gushes from a thousand Springs;  
 Seas roll to waft *me*, Suns to light *me* rise,  
*My* Footstool, Earth, *my* Canopy, the Skies.

The Ridicule of imagining the *greater Portions* of the material System were solely for the Use of Man, *Philosophy* has sufficiently exposed: And *Common Sense*, as the Poet shews, instructs us to know that *our Fellow-Creatures*, placed by Providence the joint Inhabitants of this Globe, are designed by Providence to be joint Sharers with us of its blessings.

Has God, thou Fool! work'd solely for *thy* Good,  
*Thy* Joy, *thy* Pastime, *thy* Attire, *thy* Food?  
 Who for *thy* Table feeds the wanton Fawn,  
 For him as kindly spreads the flow'ry Lawn.  
 Is it for *thee*, the Lark ascends and sings?  
 Joy tunes his Voice, Joy elevates his Wings.  
 Is it for *thee* the Linnet pours his Throat?  
 Loves of his own and Raptures swell the Note.  
*Is thine alone* the Seed that strows the Plain?  
 The Birds of Heav'n shall vindicate their Grain.

Ep. 3. l. 27.

Having thus given a general Idea of the Goodness and Wisdom of God, and the Folly and Ingratitude of Man, the great Author comes next (after this necessary Preparation) to the *Confirmation* of his *Thesis*, That partial moral Evil is universal  
 Good:

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Good: But introduceth it with a proper Argument to abate our Wonder at the Phenomenon of moral Evil, which Argument he builds on a Concession of his Adversaries. "If we ask you, says he, [from l. 136 to 147.] whether Nature doth not err from the gracious End of its Creator, when Plagues, Earthquakes, and Tempests unpeople whole Regions at a time? you readily answer, No. For that God acts by general and not by particular Laws; and that the Course of Matter and Motion must be necessarily subject to some Irregularities, because nothing created is perfect." Say you so? I then ask, why you should expect this Perfection in Man? If you own that the great *End of God* (notwithstanding all this Deviation) be *general Happiness*, then 'tis *Nature*, and not God that deviates; and do you expect greater Constancy in Man?

Then Nature deviates, and can Man do less?

i. e. If Nature, or the inanimate System (on which God hath imposed his Laws, which it obeys as a Machine obeys the Hand of the Workman) may in Course of Time deviate from its first Direction, as the best Philosophy shews it may<sup>d</sup>;

<sup>d</sup> While Comets move in very eccentric Orbs, in all Manner of Positions, blind Fate could never make all the Planets move one and the same Way in Orbs concentrick, some inconsiderable Irregularities excepted, which may have risen from the mutual Actions of Comets and Planets upon one another, and which will be apt to increase till this System wants a Reformation. *Sir Is. Newt. Optics, Quest. ult.*

where



where is the Wonder that Man, who was created a Free Agent, and hath it in his Power every moment to transgress the eternal Rule of Right, should sometimes go out of Order?

Having thus shewn how Moral Evil came into the World, namely, by *Man's Abuse of his own Free-will*, he comes to the point, the *Confirmation* of his *Thesis*, by shewing how *moral* Evil promotes *Good*; and employs the *same* Concession of his Adversaries, concerning *natural* Evil, to illustrate it.

1. He shews it tends to the *Good* of the *Whole*, or *Universe* [from l. 146 to 157.] and this by *Analogy*. "You own, says he, that Storms and Tempests, Clouds, Rain, Heat, and Variety of Seasons are necessary (notwithstanding the accidental Evils they bring with them) to the Health and Plenty of this *Globe*; why then should you suppose there is not the same Use, with regard to the *Universe*, in a *Borgia* and a *Catiline*?" But you say you can see the one and not the other. You say right. One terminates in *this System*, the other refers to the *Whole*. But, says the Poet, in *another Place*,

—of this Frame, the Bearings and the Ties,  
The strong Connexions, nice Dependencies,  
Gradations just, has thy pervading Soul  
Look'd thro'? Or can a *Part* contain the *Whole*?

l. 29, & seq.

Own therefore, says he, *here*, that,

From Pride, from Pride our very Reasoning springs,  
Account for *moral* as for *natural* Things:

Why

Why charge we Heav'n in those, in these acquit?  
In both *to reason right, is to submit.*

2. But secondly, to strengthen the foregoing *analogical* Argument, and to make the Wisdom and Goodness of God still more apparent, he observes next [from l. 156 to 165.] that *moral Evil* is not only productive of *Good* to the *Whole*, but is even productive of *Good* in our own *System*. It might, says he, perhaps appear better to us, that there were nothing in this World but *Peace* and *Virtue*,

That never Air nor Ocean felt the Wind,  
That never Passion discompos'd the Mind.

But then consider, that as our *material System* is supported by the Strife of its Elementary Particles, so is our *intellectual System* by the Conflict of our Passions, which are the Elements of human Action.

Love, Hope, and Joy, fair Pleasure's smiling  
Train,

Hate, Fear, and Grief, the Family of Pain,  
These mix'd with Art, and to due Bounds confin'd,  
Make and maintain the Balance of the Mind.

Ep. 2. l. 107, & seq.

For (as he says again in his *second* Epistle, where he illustrates this Observation at large)

What Crops of Wit and Honesty appear  
From Spleen, from Obstinacy, Hate or Fear!

l. 175.

In

In a word, as without the benefit of tempestuous *Winds*, both *Air* and *Ocean* would stagnate, and corrupt, and spread universal Contagion throughout all the Ranks of Animals that inhabit, or are supported, by them; so, without the Benefit of the *Passions*, that *Harmony*, and *Virtue*, the Effects of the Absence of those Passions, would be a lifeless Calm, a stoical *Apathy*,

Contracted all, retiring to the Breast:

But Health of Mind is *Exercise*, not *Rest*.

Ep. 2. l. 93.

Therefore, concludes the Poet, instead of regarding the *Conflict of Elements*, and the *Passions of the Mind*, as *Disorders*; you ought to consider them as what they are, Part of the *general Order* of Providence: and that they are so, appears from their always preserving the same unvaried Course, throughout all Ages, from the Creation, to the present Time:

The *general Order*, since the Whole began,

Is kept in *Nature*, and is kept in *Man*.

We see therefore it would be doing great Injustice to our Author to suspect that he intended, by this, to give any Encouragement to *Vice*; or to insinuate the *Necessity* of it to a happy Life, on the equally execrable and absurd Scheme of the Author of the *Fable of the Bees*. His System, as all his *Ethic Epistles* shew, is this, That the *Passions*, for the Reasons given above, are necessary to the Support of *Virtue*: That indeed the *Passions* in

C

Excess

Excess, produce *Vice*, which is, in its own Nature, the greatest of all Evils; and comes into the World from the Abuse of Man's Free-will; but that God, in his infinite Wisdom, and Goodness, deviously turns the natural Bias of its Malignity to the Advancement of human Happiness, and makes it productive of general *Good*:

TH' ETERNAL ART EDUCES GOOD FROM ILL.

Ep. 2. l. 165.

This, set against what we have observed of the Poet's Doctrine of a *future State*, will furnish us with an Instance of his *steering* (as he well expresses it in his Preface) *between Doctrines seemingly opposite: If his Essay has any Merit, he thinks it is in this*. And doubtless it is uncommon Merit to reject the Extravagances of every System, and take in only what is rational and real. The *Characteristics*, and the *Fable of the Bees*, are two seemingly inconsistent Systems: The Extravagancy of the first is in giving a Scheme of *Virtue without Religion*; and of the latter, in giving a Scheme of *Religion without Virtue*. These our Poet leaves to any body that will take them up; but agrees however so far with the *first*, that Virtue would be worth having, tho' itself was its only Reward; and so far with the *latter*, that God makes Evil, against its Nature, productive of Good.

The Poet having thus justified Providence in its *Permission* of partial MORAL EVIL, employs the remaining part of this Epistle in vindicating it from  
the

the *Imputation* of certain supposed NATURAL EVILS. For now he shews, that tho' the Complaint of his Adversaries against Providence be on Pretence of *real moral Evils*, yet, at bottom, it all proceeds from their Impatience under *imaginary natural ones*, the Issue of a depraved Appetite for visionary Advantages, which if Man had, they would be either *useless* or *pernicious* to him, as unsutable to his State, or repugnant to his Condition. [from l. 164 to 199.] "Tho' God (says he) hath so bountifully bestowed on Man, Faculties little less than *Angelic*, yet he ungratefully grasps at higher; and then, extravagant in another Extreme, with a Passion as ridiculous as that is impious, envies even the peculiar Accommodations of *Brutes*. But here his own Principles shew his Folly." He supposes them all made for his Use: Now what Use could he have of them, when he had robbed them of all their Qualities. *Qualities*, as they are at present divided, distributed with the highest Wisdom: But which, if bestowed according to the froward Humour of these childish Complainers, would be found to be every where either *wanting* or *superfluous*. But even with these *brutal Qualities* Man would not only be no Gainer, but a considerable Loser, as the Poet shews, in explaining the Consequences that would follow from his having his Sensations in that exquisite Degree in which this or that Animal is observed to possess them.

He tells us next [from l. 198 to 225] that the complying with such extravagant Desires would

C 2 not

not only be *useless and pernicious to Man*, but would be breaking the Order, and deforming the Beauty, of God's Creation. In which *this* Animal is subject to *that*, and *all* to Man; who by his Reason enjoys the Benefit of all their Powers :

Far as Creation's ample Range extends,  
The Scale of *sensual, mental* Pow'rs ascends:  
Mark how it mounts, to Man's imperial Race,  
From the green Myriads in the peopled Grass!  
Without this just Gradation, could they be  
Subjected these to those, or all to thee?  
The Pow'rs of all subdu'd by thee alone,  
Is not thy Reason all those Pow'rs in one?

And farther [from l. 224 to 259] that this breaking the Order of Things, which as a Link or Chain connects all Beings from the highest to the lowest, would unavoidably be attended with the Destruction of the Universe:

For if each System in Gradation roll,  
Alike essential to th' amazing Whole;  
The least Confusion but in one, not all  
That System only, but the Whole must fall.  
Let Earth unbalanc'd from her Orbit fly,  
Planets and Suns rush lawless thro' the Sky:  
Let ruling Angels from their Spheres be hurl'd,  
Being on Being wreck'd, and World on World,  
Heav'n's whole Foundations to their Centre nod,  
And Nature tremble to the Throne of God.

For that the several Parts of the Universe must  
at least compose as entire and harmonious a  
Whole

Whole as the Parts of an human Body do; cannot be doubted: Yet we see what Confusion it would make in our Frame, if the Members were set upon invading each other's Office:

What if the Foot, ordain'd the Dust to tread,  
Or Hand to toil, aspir'd to be the Head? &c.  
Just as absurd, for any Part to claim  
To be another in this gen'ral Frame:  
Just as absurd, to mourn the Task and Pains  
The great directing \* MIND of ALL ordains.

Who will not acknowledge that so harmonious a Connection in the Disposition of Things, as is here described, is transcendently beautiful? But the *Fatalists* suppose such a one.—What then? Is the first great free Agent debarred from a Contrivance so exquisite, because some Men, to set up their Idol, *Fate*, absurdly represent it as presiding over such a System?

Having thus given a Representation of God's Creation, as *one entire Whole*, where all the Parts have a necessary Dependance on and Relation to each other, and where every *Particular* works and concurs to the Perfection of the *Whole*; as such a System would be thought above the reach of vulgar Ideas; to reconcile it to their Conceptions, he shews [from l. 258 to 273] that God is equally

\* Veneramur autem et colimus ob Dominium. Deus enim sine Dominio, Providentia, et causis Finalibus, nihil aliud est quam FATUM et NATURA. *Newtoni Princip. Schol. gener. sub finem.*

C 3 and

and intimately present to every Sort of Substance, to every Particle of Matter, and in every Instant of Being; which eases the labouring Imagination, and makes it expect no less, from such a *Presence*, than such a *Dispensation*.

And now, the Poet, as he had promised, having *vindicated the Ways of God to Man*, concludes [from l. 272 to the End] that from what had been said it appears, that the very Things we blame contribute to our Happiness, either as *Particulars*, or as *Parts of the Universal System*; that our *Ignorance*, in accounting for the Ways of Providence, was allotted to us out of Compassion; that yet we have as much *Knowledge* as is sufficient to shew us, that we are, and always shall be, as blest as we can bear; for that NATURE is neither a *Stratagem* Chain of blind Causes and Effects,

(*All Nature* is but *Art* unknown to thee;)

nor yet the fortuitous Result of *Epicurean* Atoms,

(*All Chance, Direction* which thou can'st not see,) as those two Species of Atheism supposed it; but the wonderful Art and Direction (unknown indeed to Man) of an all-powerful, all-wise, all-good, and free Being. And therefore we may be assured, that the Arguments brought above, to prove partial moral Evil productive of universal Good, may be safely relied on; from whence one certain Truth results, in spite of all the Pride and Cavils of vain Reason, That **WHATSOEVER IS, IS RIGHT, WITH REGARD TO THE DISPOSITION OF GOD, AND**  
TO



TO ITS ULTIMATE TENDENCY. And this Truth once owned, all Complaints against Providence are secluded.

But that the Reader may see in one View, the *Exactness of the Method*, as well as *Force of the Argument*, I shall here draw up a short *Synopsis* of this Epistle. The Poet begins in telling us his Subject is *An Essay on Man*.—His End of Writing is to *vindicate Providence*.—Tells us against whom he wrote, *the Atheists*.—From whence he intends to fetch his Arguments, *from the visible Things of God seen in this System*.—Lays down this Proposition as the Foundation of his Thesis, *that of all possible Systems, infinite Wisdom has formed the best*.—Draws from thence two Consequences; 1. *That there must needs be somewhere such a Creature as Man*; 2. *That the moral Evil which He is the Author of, is productive of the Good of the Whole*. This is his general Thesis; from whence he draws this Conclusion, *That Man should rest submissive and content, and make the Hopes of Futurity his Comfort, — but not suffer this to be the Occasion of PRIDE, which is the Cause of all his impious Complaints*.

He proceeds to confirm his Thesis.—Previously endeavours to abate our Wonder at the Phenomenon of *moral Evil*.—Shews first *its Use to the Perfection of the Universe*, by Analogy, from the Use of *Physical Evil* in this particular System.—Secondly, *its Use in this System*, where it is turned, providentially, from its natural Bias, to promote

Virtue.—Then goes on to vindicate Providence from the Imputation of certain *supposed natural Evils*, as he had before justified it for the Permission of *real moral Evil*, in shewing that tho' the Atheist's Complaint against Providence be on Pretence of *real moral Evil*, yet the true Cause is his Impatience under *imaginary natural Evil*; the Issue of a *depraved Appetite for fantastical Advantages*, which he shews, if obtain'd, would be *useless*, or *hurtful to Man*,—and deforming and destructive to the *Universe*; as breaking into that *Order* by which it is supported.—He describes that *Order, Harmony, and close Connection of the Parts*. And by shewing the intimate *Presence of God* to his whole Creation, gives a Reason for an Universe so amazingly beautiful, and perfect. From all this he deduces his general *Conclusion*, that *Nature being neither a blind Chain of Causes and Effects, nor yet the fortuitous Result of wandering Atoms, but the wonderful Art and Direction of an all-wise, all-good, and free Being; Whatever is, is Right, with regard to the Disposition of God and its Ultimate Tendency*; which once granted, all Complaints against Providence are at an End.

This is a plain and consistent Account of the Argument of this famous Epistle, which (tho' here humbled, and stripped of all its Ornaments) hath such a *Force of Reasoning* as would support Rhimes as bad as *Donne's*, and such a *Strain of Poetry* as would immortalize even the wretched Sophistry that Mr. DE CROUSAZ has employed against it.

Whose

Whose Objections it is now high time we should consider. For having shewn what Mr. *Pope's* System really is, we come next to shew what it is *not*; namely, what that Writer hath the Injustice, or the Folly, to represent it. He begins his *Examination*, with saying, that "Mr. *Pope* seems to " him, quite throughout his System, to embrace " the *pre-established Harmony* of the celebrated " *Leibnitz*, which, in his Opinion, establishes a " Fatality destructive of all Religion and Morality.<sup>b</sup>"—That the *pre-established Harmony* of *Leibnitz* terminates in Fate, is readily owned; but that Mr. *Pope* hath espoused that impious Whimsy, is an utter Chimæra. The *pre-established Harmony* was built upon, and is an outrageous Extension of, a Conception of *Plato's*; who combating the atheistical Objections about the Origin of Evil, employs this Argument in Defence of Providence; " That, amongst an infinite Number of possible " Worlds in God's Idea, *this*, which he hath created, and brought into Being, and admits of a " Mixture of Evil, is the *best*." But if the *best*, then Evil consequently is *partial*, comparatively small, and *tends* to the greater Perfection of the *whole*. This *Principle* is espoused and supported by Mr. *Pope* with all the Power of Reason and Poetry. But neither was *Plato* a *Fatalist*, nor is there any *Fatalism* in the Argument. As to the Truth of the Notion, that is another Question;

<sup>b</sup> *Examen de l'Essai de Mr. Pope sur l'Homme.*

and

and how far it clears up the very difficult Controversy about the Origin of Evil, that is still *another*. That it is a full Solution of all Difficulties, I cannot think, for Reasons too long to be given in this Place. Perhaps we shall never have a full Solution here; and it may be no great Matter tho' we have not, as we are demonstrably certain of the *moral Attributes* of the Deity. However, what may justify Mr. *Pope* in enforcing and illustrating this *Platonic* Notion is, that it has been received by the most celebrated and orthodox *Divines* both of the ancient and modern Church.

This Doctrine, we own, then, was taken up by *Leibnitz*; but it was to ingraft upon it a most pernicious *Fatalism*. *Plato* said, God *chose* the best: *Leibnitz* said, he *could not but* chuse the best. *Plato* supposed *Freedom* in God, to chuse one of two Things equally good: *Leibnitz* held the Supposition to be absurd; but however, admitting the Case, he maintained that God *could not* chuse *one* of *two* Things *equally* good. Thus it appears the first went on the *System* of *Freedom*; and that the latter, notwithstanding the most artful Disguises in his *Theodicée*, was a thorough *Fatalist*. For we cannot well suppose he would give that *Freedom* to Man which he had taken away from God. The Truth of the Matter seems to have been this: He saw, on the one hand, the monstrous Absurdity of supposing, with *Spinoza*, that *blind Fate* was the Author of a coherent Universe; but yet on the other, could not conceive, with *Plato*, that God  
could

could foresee and conduct, according to an archetypal Idea, a World, of all possible Worlds the *best*, inhabited by *free Agents*. This Difficulty, therefore, which made the *Socinians* take *Prescience from God*, disposed *Leibnitz* to take *Free-will from Man*: And thus he fashioned his fantastical Hypothesis: He supposed that, when God made the Body, he impressed on his new-created Machine a certain Series or *Suite of Motions*; and that when he made the fellow Soul, the same Series of *Ideas*, whose Operations, throughout the whole Duration of the Union, so exactly jumped, that whenever an *Idea* was excited, a correspondent *Motion* was ever ready to satisfy the *Volition*. Thus for Instance, when the Mind had the Will to raise the Arm to the Head, the Body was so pre-contrived as to raise, at that very Moment, the Part required. This he called the PRE-ESTABLISHED HARMONY. And with this he promised to do Wonders.

Now we see, that, from the Principle of *Plato*, as well as from that of *Leibnitz*, this grand Consequence follows, THAT WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT; because every thing in this World, even Evil itself, tends to the greater Perfection of the *whole*. This Mr. Pope employs as a *Principle*, throughout a Poem (the most sublime that ever was written) to humble the Pride of Man, who would impiously make God accountable for his Creation. What then does common Sense teach us to understand by *whatever is, is right*? Did the Poet mean *right* with

with regard to Man, or *right* with regard to God? *Right* with regard to itself, or *right* with regard to its ultimate Tendency? Surely *with regard to God*: For he tells us, his Design is

To vindicate the Ways of God to Man.

l. 16.

Surely *with regard to its ultimate Tendency*: For he tells us again,

All partial Ill is universal Good. l. 283

Yet Mr. *De Croufaz* preposterously takes it the other way; and so perversely interpreted, it is no Wonder that he, and his wise Friends, should find the Poem full of Contradictions<sup>c</sup>.

But, before we come to an Examination of Particulars, it will be necessary to remind the Reader once again, that the Subject of this Epistle is a Justification of Providence, against the impious Objections of atheistic Men. It is to *vindicate the Ways of God to Man*.—Thus the Poet addresses them at the *Beginning*:

<sup>c</sup> J'ai lû l'essai de Mr. Pope (repond un Ami de la compagnie) et jamais je n'eus plus besoin de patience. J'ai fait de grands efforts, pour y trouver quelque sens raisonnable, et je les ai faits inutilement. Tantôt j'y suis tombé sur des precisions sophistiques, tantôt sur des decisions également hardies et sans preuves, tantôt enfin sur de longues periodes d'un pompeux galimatias, &c. *Examen de l'Essai*.—Thus his Friend runs on in this abusive Way, and grows more particular in his Scurri- lity, while Mr. *De Croufaz*, good Man, is unable to make him hold his Peace.

Presum-

Presumptuous Man! the Reason would'st thou find  
Why form'd so weak, so little, and so blind?

l. 35.

Then say not Man's imperfect, *Heav'n in fault.*

l. 69.

As he proceeds, he still applies his Reasoning  
to the *same Men*:

Go — and in thy Scale of Sense  
*Weigh thy Opinion against Providence;*  
Call Imperfection what thou fancy'st such;  
Say, here *he gives too little, there too much;*  
Destroy all Creatures for thy Sport or Gust:  
Yet cry, If Man's unhappy, *God's unjust.*

l. 109, & seq.

And concludes with this Reproof to them:

Cease then, nor *Order Imperfection* name.

l. 273.

Having premised thus much, we now proceed  
to Mr. *de Crousaz*.

Mr. *Pope* had said:

The Lamb thy Riot dooms to bleed to-day,  
Had he thy Reason, would he skip and play?  
Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry Food,  
And licks the Hand just rais'd to shed his Blood.  
O Blindness to the Future! kindly giv'n,  
That each may fill the Circle mark'd by Heav'n.

l. 77, & seq.

On which his *Commentator*:—"We do not,  
indeed, perceive any Thing in Beasts, that shews  
they have an Idea or Apprehension of Death.

But

“ But, surely, with regard to Man, to reflect on  
 “ Death, and to contemplate the Certainty of it,  
 “ are of great Use to a prudent Life and a happy  
 “ Death. Reason and Religion agree in this, and  
 “ a Man must want both one and the other, to  
 “ cry out,

“ O Blindness to the Future! kindly giv’n,  
 “ That each may fill the Circle mark’d by Heav’n.

“ This supposes, that if Men had a Foreknow-  
 “ ledge of their Destiny, they would do all they  
 “ could to avoid it, and that they would succeed:  
 “ Because, without this Ignorance, Heaven, it  
 “ seems, could never bring all its *Beings* to fill  
 “ that Circle mark’d out by it. Yet this, notwith-  
 “ standing, is a Consequence that can have no  
 “ Place, if it be impossible for Men to act with  
 “ Freedom. But the Doctrine of FATE necessa-  
 “ rily draws us into Contradictions.”<sup>d</sup> Mr. Crou-  
 saz introduces his *Commentary*, by solemnly ac-  
 quainting his Reader, *That he had, from his very*  
*Infancy, a strong Bias towards LOGIC; that he*  
*has given a considerable Time to that Study, and does*  
*not repent his Pains; that he has profited by Maxims*  
*which he has found in Books not written with*  
*Design to give them; that he has run through every*  
*Book that has fallen into his Hands under that*  
*Title, or any Thing approaching to it; that he has not*

<sup>d</sup> *Commentaire sur la Traduction en vers de Mr. l'Abbé du Resnel de L'Essai de Mr. Pope sur l'Homme, p. 63, 64.*



*even neglected the most out-of-fashion'd Works of this Kind: But, as the greatest Treasure is worthless, unless well used, he is resolved to employ some of it upon Mr. Pope<sup>e</sup>. And here you have the Fruits of his Labours. Here he has shewn, to some Purpose, his Skill in extracting Doctrines from Books not design'd to give them. And for this Passage I will be answerable, that he has extracted a Doctrine from it which our POET did not design to give; who, when he had answer'd the atheistical Objection about positive Evil, supposes the Objector to reply to this Effect:—It may be true, what you say, that *partial Evil tends to universal Good*: But why, then, has not God let me clearly into this Secret, and acquainted me with the Manner how? The Poet replies, “For very good Reasons. “You were sent into the World on a Task and “Duty to be performed by you. And as the “knowing these Things might distract you, or “draw you from your Station; it was in Mercy “that God hath hid these Things from you:*

Heav'n from all Creatures hides the Book of Fate,  
All but the Page prescrib'd, their present State,  
From Brutes what Men, from Men what Spirits  
know;

*Or who would suffer Being here below?*

l. 73, & seq.

“To illustrate this by a familiar Instance; how  
“kindly hath Nature acted by the Lamb, in hiding  
“its Death from it; the Knowledge of which  
“would have imbitter'd all its Life?” This is the

<sup>e</sup> P. 27, 28.

Force

Force of the Poet's Argument; and nothing can be better connected, or more beautiful. But our great *Logician*, instead of attending to the Argument of a very close Reasoner (whose Thread of Reasoning, therefore, one should have imagin'd might have conducted a Mathematician too, as he is, to the true Sense of the Passage) rambles after a Meaning that could not possibly be Mr. *Pope's*; because it both disagrees with the Context, and directly opposes what he lays down in express Words in this very Essay. Mr. *De Crousaz*, we see, imagines that this Instance of the *Lamb* was given to shew how *hurtful a Gift* God bestowed upon us, when he gave us the Knowledge of our End. Mr. *Pope* says expressly, that it was a *friendly Gift*:

To each *unthinking* Being Heav'n a *Friend*,  
 Gives not the *useless Knowledge of its End*:  
 To *Man* imparts it; but with such a View,  
 As, while he dreads it, makes him *hope* it too.

Ep. iii. l. 75, & seq.

*i. e.* "Heaven, which is not only friendly to Man,  
 "but Beast, gives not this *latter* the Knowledge of  
 "its End; because such Knowledge (which is ne-  
 "cessarily attended with Anxiety) would be useless  
 "to it. On the other hand, He gives it to Man;  
 "because it is of the highest Advantage to him,  
 "who, being to exist in a future State, may, by  
 "this Means, make a fitting Preparation for his  
 "good Reception there; which Preparation will  
 "temper, and, at length, quite subdue the Anxiety  
 "necessarily attendant (as is said) on the Know-  
 ledge

“ ledge of our End, by the certain *Hope* of a happy Immortality.”

After these extraordinary Fruits of our Logician's long Application to *the Art of Thinking*, he goes on, for four Pages together <sup>f</sup>, to shew how useful and necessary it is for Man to cultivate his Understanding. You ask whom he contradicts in this? He absurdly supposes, Mr. *Pope*; while he is indeed but quarelling with his own Imaginations. Here we must recollect what we observed above of the Subject of the Poem; which is a Vindication of Providence against impious Complainers. As these will not acknowledge it just and good, because they cannot comprehend it, and as this Argument is only supported by *Pride*, the Poet thought proper to mortify that *Pride*; which could not be done more effectually, than by shewing them, that even a Savage *Indian* reasoned better:

Lo! the poor *Indian*, whose untutor'd Mind  
Sees God in Clouds, and hears him in the Wind;  
His Soul proud Science never taught to stray  
Far as the Solar Walk, or Milky Way;  
Yet simple Nature to his Hope has giv'n,  
Behind the cloud-topt Hill, an humbler Heav'n;  
To *be* contents his natural Desire,  
He asks no Angel's Wing, or Seraph's Fire, &c.  
l. 95. & seq.

What are we to conclude from hence? That Mr.

<sup>f</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 66 to 70.

*Pope* intended to discourage all Improvements of the human Understanding? or that it was only his Design to deter Men from Impiety, and from presuming to *rejudge the Justice* of their Creator? Mr. *Croufaz*, contrary to common Sense, and the whole Tenor of the Epistle, has chosen the former Part; tho' Mr. *Pope* had immediately added,

Go wiser thou, and in thy Scale of Sense  
 Weigh thy Opinion against Providence.  
 Call Imperfection what thou fancy'st such,  
 Say, Here he gives too little, there too much;  
 Destroy all Creatures for thy Sport or Gust:  
 Yet cry, If Man's unhappy, God's unjust.

l. 109, & seq.

But to this, the *Commentator*:—"To whom  
 " does Mr. *Pope* address himself in this long Pe-  
 " riod? Is it to those presumptuous Men, who are  
 " continually confounding themselves, and abusing  
 " the Fruitfulness of their Imaginations, to teize  
 " good Christians with Objections against Provi-  
 " dence? Their Rashness and Impatience well  
 " deserve, in my Opinion, the Censures Mr. *Pope*  
 " here inflicts upon them."—Wonderful! Our  
 Logician has, at length, discovered the Subject of  
 Mr. *Pope's* Epistle. Why then did he not do Ju-  
 stice to Truth, by striking out all the rest of his  
 Remarks? For if this be right, all the rest must, of  
 consequence, be wrong.

§ *Commentaire*, p 79.

Mr.

Mr. *Pope* says, speaking of the End of Providence,  
 As much that End a constant Course requires  
 Of Showers and Sunshine, as of Man's Desires;  
 As much eternal Springs and cloudless Skies,  
 As Men for ever temp'rate, calm and wise.

l. 147, & seq.

On which the *Examiner*, "A continual Spring  
 " and a Heaven without Clouds would be fatal to  
 " the Earth and its Inhabitants; but can we re-  
 " gard it as a Misfortune that Men should be al-  
 " ways sage, calm and temperate? I am quite  
 " in the dark as to this Comparifon<sup>b</sup>." Let us  
 try if we can drag him into light, as unwilling  
 as he is to fee. The Argument ftands thus.—Pre-  
 fumptuous Man complains of moral Evil; Mr. *Pope*  
 checks and informs him thus: The Evil, fays he,  
 you complain of, tends to univerfal Good; for as  
 Clouds, and Rain, and Tempeft, are neceffary to  
 preferve Health and Plenty in this sublunary World,  
 fo the *Evils* that fpring from diforder'd Paflions  
 are neceffary.—To what? Not to Man's Happi-  
 nefs here, but to the Perfection of the Univerfe  
 in general. So that,

If Plagues or Earthquakes break not Heav'n's  
 Design,

Why then a *Borgia* or a *Catiline*?

On which the *Examiner* thus defcants,—“ Thefe  
 “ Lines have no Senfe but on the System of *Leib-*  
 “ *nitz*, which confounds Morals with Physics;

<sup>b</sup> *Examen de l'Effai, &c.*

“ and in which, all that we call Pleasures, Grief,  
 “ Contentment, Inquietude, Wisdom, Virtue,  
 “ Truth, Error, Vices, Crimes, Abominations,  
 “ are the inevitable Consequences of a fatal Chain  
 “ of Things as ancient as the World. But this is  
 “ it which renders the System so horrible, that  
 “ all honest Men must shudder at it. It is, in-  
 “ deed, sufficient to humble human Nature, to re-  
 “ flect that this was invented by a Man, and that  
 “ other Men have adopted it <sup>h</sup>.” This is, indeed,  
 very tragical; but we have shewn above, that  
 it hath its Sense on the *Platonic*, not the *Leib-*  
*nitzian* System; and besides, that the Context con-  
 fines us to that Sense.

What hath misled the Examiner is his supposing  
 the Comparison to be between the Effects of *two*  
*Things in this sublunary World*; when not only the  
*Elegancy*, but the *Justness* of it consists in its being  
 between the *Effects* of a Thing in the *Universe at*  
*large*, and the familiar and known *Effects* of one  
 in *this sublunary World*. For the *Position* inforc'd  
 in these Lines is this, *that partial Evil tends to the*  
*Good of the Whole* :

*Respecting Man*, whatever Wrong we call,  
 May, must be right, as relative to all.

l. 51.

*How* does the Poet inforce it? Why, if you  
 will believe the Examiner, by illustrating the Ef-  
 fects of partial moral Evil in a particular System,  
 by that of partial natural Evil in the *same* Sy-

<sup>h</sup> *Examen de l'Essai*, &c.

stem,

stem, and so leaves his *Position* in the lurch; but we must never believe the great Poet reasons like the *Logician*. The Way to prove his Point he knew was to illustrate the Effect of partial moral Evil in the *Universe*, by partial natural Evil in a *particular System*. Whether partial moral Evil tend to the Good of the Universe, being a *Question*, which by reason of our Ignorance of many Parts of that Universe, we cannot decide, but from known Effects; the Rules of Argument require that it be proved by *Analogy*, i. e. setting it by, and comparing it with a Thing *certain*; and it is a Thing *certain*, that partial natural Evil tends to the Good of our *particular System*. This is his Argument: And thus, we see, it stands clear of Mr. De Crousaz's Objection, and of Leibnitz's Fatalism.

After having enforced this analogical *Position*, the Poet then indeed, in order to strengthen and support it, employs the same Instance of natural Evil, to shew that, even here to *Man*, as well as to the *Whole*, moral Evil is productive of Good, by the gracious Disposition of Providence, who turns it deviously from its natural Tendency.

Mr. Pope then adds,

From Pride, from Pride, our very Reasoning  
springs;

Account for moral, as for nat'ral Things:

Why charge we Heav'n in those, in these acquit?

In both to reason right, is to submit.

l. 153, & seq.

Our Commentator asks—"Why, then, does

D 3

"Mr.

“ Mr. *Pope* pretend to reason upon the Matter,  
 “ and rear his Head so high, and decide so dog-  
 “ matically, upon the most important of all Sub-  
 “ jects<sup>1</sup>?” This is indeed pleasant. Suppose Mr.  
*De Croufaze* should undertake to shew the Folly  
 of pretending to penetrate into the Mysteries of  
 revealed Religion, as here Mr. *Pope* has done of  
*natural*, must he not employ the Succours of Rea-  
 son? And could he conclude his Reasonings  
 with ‘greater Truth and Modesty, than in the  
 Words of Mr. *Pope*?—*To reason right, is to sub-*  
*mit.*—But he goes on, “ If you will believe him  
 “ [Mr. *Pope*] the Sovereign Perfections of the eter-  
 “ nal Being have *inevitably* determined him to  
 “ create this Universe, because the Idea of it was  
 “ the most perfect of all those which represented  
 “ many possible Worlds. Notwithstanding, there  
 “ is nothing perfect in this Part, which is assign-  
 “ ed for our Habitation; it swarms with Imper-  
 “ fections; it is God who is the Cause of them,  
 “ and it was not in his Power to contrive Matters  
 “ otherwise. The Poet had not the Caution to  
 “ recur to Man’s Abuse of his own Free-will, the  
 “ true Source of all our Miseries, and which are  
 “ agreeable to that State of Disorder in which  
 “ Men live by their own Fault<sup>k</sup>.” I will venture  
 to say, every Part of this Reflection is false and  
 calumnious. The first Part of it, that the *Eternal*  
*Being*, according to Mr. *Pope*, was *inevitably* de-

<sup>1</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 94.

<sup>k</sup> *Ib.* 94, 95.

terminated,



terminated, and that he *had not Power to contrive Matters otherwise*, I have already shewn to be so. It is still a more unpardonable Calumny to say that *Mr. Pope has thrown the Cause of moral Evil upon God, and had not the Caution to recur to Man's Abuse of his own Free-will*: For Mr. De Crousaz could not but see that the Poet had, in so many Words, thrown the Cause entirely upon *that Abuse*, where, speaking of natural and moral Evil, he says,

WHAT makes all Physicall and Morall Ill!

There deviates Nature, and here WANDERS  
WILL,

GOD SENDS NOT ILL.

Ep. iv. l. 109, & seq.

When he had said this, and acquitted the supreme Cause, he then informs us what is God's Agency, after Natural and Moral Evil had been thus produced by the Deviation of Nature, and Depravity of Will; namely that he hath so contrived, in his infinite Wisdom and Goodness, that Good shall arise from this Evil.

—— If rightly understood,

Or partial Ill is universal Good,

Or Chance admits, or Nature lets it fall,

Short and but rare, till Man improv'd it all.

l. 111, & seq.

And speaking in another Place of God's Providence, he says,

D 4

That

That counterworks each Folly and Caprice,  
That disappoints th' Effects of ev'ry Vice.

Ep. ii. l. 229.

What is this but bringing Good out of Evil?  
And how distant is that from being the Cause of Evil?

After this, a *Philosopher* should never think of writing more till he had rectified what he had already wrote so much amiss.

The next Passage the *Examiner* attacks is the following:

Better for us, perhaps, it might appear,  
Were there all Harmony, all Virtue here;  
That never Air or Ocean felt the Wind;  
That never Passion discompos'd the Mind:  
But all subsists by elemental Strife,  
*And Passions are the Elements of Life.*

l. 157, & seq.

Here the Examiner upbraids Mr. *Pope* for degrading himself so far as to write to the gross Prejudices of the People. "In the corporeal Nature  
" (says he) there is no Piece of Matter that is  
" perfectly simple; all are composed of small  
" Particles, called elementary; from their Mix-  
" ture, proceeds a Fermentation, sometimes weak,  
" and sometimes strong, which still farther at-  
" tenuates these Particles; and thus agitated and di-  
" vided, they serve for the Nourishment and  
" Growth of organic Bodies; to this Growth it is  
" we give the Name of Life. But what have the  
" Passions in common with these Particles? Do  
their

“ their Mixture and Fermentation serve for the  
 “ Nourishment of that Substance which thinks,  
 “ and do they constitute the Life of that Sub-  
 “ stance<sup>1</sup>?” Thus Mr. *De Croufaz*, who, as, a  
 little before, he could not see the *Nature* of the  
 Comparison, so here, by a more deplorable Blind-  
 ness, could not see that there was *any* Comparison  
*at all*. “ You, says Mr. *Pope*, perhaps may think  
 “ it would be better, that neither Air nor Ocean  
 “ was vexed with Tempests, nor that the Mind  
 “ was ever discomposed by Passion; but consider,  
 “ that as in the one Case our *material* System is  
 “ supported by the Strife of its elementary Parti-  
 “ cles, so in the *Intellectual*, the Passions of the  
 “ Mind are, as it were, the Elements of *human*  
 “ *Life*, i. e. Actions.” All here is clear, solid,  
 and well-reasoned, and hath been considered above.  
 What must we say then to our *Examiner's* wild  
 Talk of the *Mixture and Fermentation of elementary*  
*Particles of Matter for the Nourishment of that*  
*Substance that thinks, and of its constituting the Life*  
*of that Substance?* I call it the *Examiner's*, for, you  
 see, it is not Mr. *Pope's*; and Mr. *Croufaz* ought to  
 be charged with it, because it may be questioned  
 whether it was a *simple Blunder*, he urging it so  
 invidiously as to insinuate that Mr. *Pope* might pro-  
 bably hold the *Materiality of the Soul*. However,  
 if it was a Mistake, it was a pleasant one, and arose  
 from the Ambiguity of the Word *Life*, which in

<sup>1</sup> *Examen de l'Essai.*

## 42 A COMMENTARY on

*English*, as *la vie* in *French*, signifies both *Existence* and *human Action*, and is always to have its Sense determined by the Context.

Mr. *Pope* says, speaking of the Brute Creation,  
*Nature* to these, without Profusion, kind,  
 The proper Organs, proper Powers assign'd.

l. 171.

Mr. *Croufaz* observes, that "In this Verse, by  
 " the Term *Nature*, we must necessarily under-  
 " stand the *Author of Nature*; it is a Figure much  
 " in Use. SPINOZA has employ'd all his Meta-  
 " physics to confound these two Significations<sup>m</sup>."  
 Therefore, I suppose, Mr. *Pope* must not employ  
 the Word at all, tho' it be to vindicate it from that  
*Abuse*, by distinguishing its *different* Significations.  
 But this we are to consider as a Touch of our  
 Logician's Art. It is what they call *Argumentum*  
*ad invidiam*.

The Poet,

Far as Creation's ample Range extends,  
 The Scale of sensual, mental Powers ascends:  
 Mark how it mounts to *Man's imperial Race*,  
 From the green Myriads in the peopled Grass.

Ep. i. l. 199, & seq.

On this the *Commentator*, "That Place of Ho-  
 " nour, which the Poet has refused to Man in  
 " another Part of his Epistle, he gives him here,  
 " because it serves to embellish and perfect the  
 " Gradation. At every Step Mr. *Pope* forgets one

<sup>m</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 99.

" of

“ of those principal and most essential Rules,  
 “ which Mr. *Des Cartes* lays down in his *Method*;  
 “ that is, exactly to review what one asserts, so  
 “ that *no Part* be found to be *gratis dictum*,  
 “ nor the *Whole* repugnant to itself.” This we  
 are to understand, as said, διαλεκτικῶς. But I shall  
 beg leave to observe that our Logician here gives  
 his Lessons very impertinently. For, that Mr.  
*Pope*, in calling the *Race of Man imperial*, hath  
 bestowed no Title on him in this Place, which he  
 had denied him elsewhere. He, with great Piety  
 and Prudence, supposes what the Scripture tells us  
 to be true, that *Man was created Lord of this in-*  
*ferior World*; he supposes it, I say, in these Lines  
 of this very Epistle :

Without this just Gradation could they be  
*Subjected* these to those, and *all to thee* ?

The Pow'rs of all subdu'd by thee alone,  
 Is not thy Reason all those Pow'rs in one ?

l. 221. & seq.

He expressly asserts it in the *third Epistle* :

Heav'n's Attribute was universal Care,  
 And *Man's Prerogative to rule*, but spare.

l. 160.

And this, in the very Place where he gives the  
 Description of Man in Paradise.

What misled our Critic so far as to imagine Mr.  
*Pope* had here contradicted himself was, I suppose,

Commentaire, p. 108.

such

such Passages as these :

Ask for what End the heav'nly Bodies shine, &c.  
And again :

Has God, thou Fool! work'd solely for thy  
Good, &c.

But in Truth this is so far from a Contradiction to what was said before of *Man's Prerogative*, that it is a Confirmation of it, and of what the Scripture tells us concerning it. And because this Matter has been mistaken, to the Discredit of the Poet's religious Sentiments, by Readers, whom the Conduct of certain licentious Writers, treating this Subject in an abusive Way, hath rendered jealous and mistrustful, I shall endeavour to explain it. Scripture says, that Man was made *Lord of All*.—But this Lord, become, at length, intoxicated with Pride, the common Effect of Sovereignty, erected himself, like particular Monarchs, into a *Tyrant*. And as *Tyranny* consists in supposing *all made for the Use of one*; he took those Freedoms with *all*, that are consequent on such a Principle. He soon began to consider the whole Animal Creation as his *Slaves*, rather than his *Subjects*; as being created for no Use of *their own*, but for *his* only; and therefore used them with the utmost Barbarity: And not so content; to add *Insult* to his *Cruelty*, he endeavoured to philosophise himself into an Opinion, that *Animals* were mere *Machines*, insensible of Pain or Pleasure. And thus, as Mr. *Pope* says, *Man* affected to be the *Wit*, as well

well as *Tyrant of the Whole*°. Our Commentator can tell us what deep Philosopher it was that invented this witty System, and by the Assistance of what METHOD so wonderful a Discovery was brought to Light. It became then one who adhered to the Scripture Account of *Man's Dominion*, to reprove this Abuse of it, and to shew that,

Heav'n's Attribute was *universal Care*,  
And *Man's Prerogative to rule*, BUT SPARE.

The poetical Translator<sup>p</sup>, has turned the Words,  
to *Man's imperial Race*, by

Jusqu' à l'Homme, ce Chef, ce Roy de l'Univers!  
*Even to Man, this Head, this King of the Universe.*  
Which is so sad a Blunder, that it contradicts Mr. Pope's whole System. Who, altho' he allows Man to be King of this inferior World, is far from thinking him *King of the Universe*. If the System itself could not teach him this, yet methinks the following Lines of this very Epistle might:

So Man, who here seems *Principal* alone,  
Perhaps acts *Second* to some Sphere unknown.

l. 57.

If the Translator imagined Mr. Pope was here speaking *ironically*, where he talks of *Man's impe-*

° Grant that the Pow'rful still the Weak controul,  
Be *Man* the *Wit* and *Tyrant* of the whole.

Ep. iii. 54.

p Mr. l'Abbé du Resnel.

rial

*rial Race*, and so would heighten the Ridicule by *ce Roy de l'Univers*, the Mistake is still worse; the Force of the Argument depending upon its being said *seriously*. For the Poet is speaking of a Scale, from the *highest* to the lowest, in the Mundane System.

But now we come to the famous Passage which is to fix the Charge :

All are but Parts of one stupendous Whole,  
 Whose Body Nature is, and God the Soul.  
 That, chang'd thro' all, and yet in all the same,  
 Great in the Earth as in th'Ethereal Frame,  
 Warms in the Sun, refreshes in the Breeze,  
 Glows in the Stars, and blossoms in the Trees,  
 Lives thro' all Life, extends thro' all Extent,  
 Spreads undivided, operates unspent,  
 Breaths in our Soul, informs our mortal Part,  
 As full, as perfect, in a Hair as Heart;  
 As full, as perfect, in vile Man that mourns,  
 As the rapt Seraph that adores and burns:  
 To him no high, no low, no great, no small;  
 He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all.

Ep.i. l. 259, & seq.

On which our *Examiner* blind to the Light of Reason, as well as *deaf* to the *Charms* of Harmony, — *A Spinozist* (says he) *would express himself in this Manner*<sup>1</sup>. I believe he would, and so would *St. Paul* too, writing on the same Subject, namely, the Omnipresence of God in his Provi-

<sup>1</sup> *Examen de l'Essai.*

dence,



dence, and in his Substance. *In him we live and move and have our Being*<sup>r</sup>; i. e. we are *Parts* of him, his *Offspring*, as the Greek Poet, a *Pantheist*, quoted by the Apostle, observes: And the Reason is, because a religious *Theist*, and an impious *Pantheist*, both profess to believe the Omnipresence of God. But would *Spinoza*, as Mr. *Pope* does, call God *the great directing Mind of all*, who hath intentionally created a perfect Universe<sup>s</sup>? Or would Mr. *Pope*, like *Spinoza*, say there is but one universal Substance in the Universe, and that blind too? We know *Spinoza* would not say the first; and we ought not to think Mr. *Pope* would say the latter, because he says the direct contrary throughout the Poem. Now it is *this* latter only that is *Spinozism*.

But this sublime Description of the Godhead contains not only the *Divinity* of St. *Paul*; but, if that will not satisfy, the *Philosophy* likewise of Sir *Isaac Newton*.

The *Poet* says,

All are but *Parts* of one stupendous Whole,  
Whose Body Nature is, and God the *Soul*.

The *Philosopher*, "Deus omnipræsens est, non

<sup>r</sup> For in him we live and move, and have our Being;  
as certain also of your own Poets have said, For we are  
also his Offspring. Acts xvii. 28.

<sup>s</sup> For that is the Meaning of

All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;  
All Chance, Direction which thou canst not see.

l. 281.

" per

“ per *Virtutem* solam, sed etiam per SUBSTAN-  
 “ TIAM: nam *Virtus* sine *Substantia* subsistere non  
 “ potest<sup>1</sup>.”

Mr. Pope,

That, chang'd thro' all, and yet in all the same,  
 Great in the Earth as in th'Ethereal Frame,  
 Warms in the Sun, refreshes in the Breeze,  
 Glows in the Stars, and blossoms in the Trees,  
 Lives thro' all Life, extends thro' all Extent,  
 Spreads undivided, operates unspent.

Sir I. Newton,—“ In ipso continentur et moven-  
 “ tur universa, sed *absque* *mutua* *passione*. Deus  
 “ nihil patitur ex corporum motibus; illa nullam  
 “ sentiunt *resistentiam* ex *Omni-præsentia* Dei.—  
 “ Corpore omni et figura corporea destituitur<sup>2</sup>.”—  
 “ Omnia regit et omnia cognoscit.—Cum unaquæ-  
 “ que spatii particula sit *semper*, et unumquodque  
 “ Durationis indivisibile momentum, *ubique*, certe  
 “ rerum omnium Fabricator ac Dominus non  
 “ erit *nunquam*, *nusquam*<sup>2</sup>.”

Mr. Pope,

Breaths in our Soul, informs our mortal Part,  
 As full, as perfect in a Hair as Heart;  
 As full, as perfect, in vile Man that mourns,  
 As the rapt Seraph that adores and burns:  
 To him no high, no low, no great, no small;  
 He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all.

Sir I. Newton,—“ Annon ex Phænomenis con-

<sup>1</sup> Newtoni *Principia* Schol. gener. sub finem.

<sup>2</sup> Id. ib.

<sup>2</sup> Id. ib.

“ stat

“stat esse Entem Incorporeum, Viventem, Intel-  
 “ligentem, Omnipræsentem, qui in spatio infinito,  
 “tanquam sensorio suo, *Res ipsas* intime cernat,  
 “penitusque perspiciat, *totasque intra se præsens*  
 “*præsentēs completatur*”.

But now admitting, for Argument's sake, that there was an Ambiguity in these Expressions, so great, as that a *Spinozist* might employ them to express his own particular Principles; and such a thing might well be, without any Reflection on the *Poet's* Religion, or Exactness as a Writer, because it is none on the *Apostle's*; who actually did that which Mr. *Pope* is not only falsely, but, as we see from this Instance, foolishly accused of doing: And because the *Spinozists*, in order to hide the Impiety of their Principle, are used to express the *Omnipresence* of God in Terms that any religious Theist might employ. In this Case, I say, how are we to judge of the *Poet's* Meaning? Surely by the whole Tenor of his Argument. Now take the Words in the Sense of the *Spinozists*, and he is made, in the Conclusion of his Epistle, to overthrow all he has been advancing throughout the Body of it: For *Spinozism* is the Destruction of an Universe, where every thing tends, by a foreseen Contrivance in all its Parts, to the Perfection of the *Whole*. But allow him to employ the Passage in the Sense of St. *Paul*, *that we and all Creatures live, and move, and have our Being in God*,

Optice Quæst. 20.  
 E

and

and then it will be seen to be the most logical Support of all that had preceded. For the Poet having, as we say, labour'd through his Epistle, to prove that every Thing in the Universe tends, by a foreseen Contrivance, and a present Direction of all its Parts, to the Perfection of the *Whole*; it might be objected that such a Disposition of Things implying in God a painful, operose and inconceivable Extent of Providence, it could not be supposed that such Care extended to *all*, but was confined to the more noble Parts of the Creation. This gross Conception of the *First Cause*, the Poet exposes, by shewing that God is equally and intimately present to every Particle of Matter, to every Sort of Substance, and in every Instant of Being.

And how truly, may be seen by *the Inquiry into the Nature of the human Soul*, wrote expressly against *Spinozism*, where the excellent Author has shewn the Necessity of the *immediate Influence of God*, in every Moment of Time, to keep Matter from falling back into its primitive Nothing.

The *Examiner* goes on: "Mr. *Pope* hath Reason to call this Whole, a *stupendous Whole*; nothing being more paradoxical and incredible, if we take his Description literally<sup>b</sup>." I will add, nor nothing more so than St. *Paul's*, *in him we live, and move, and have our Being*, if taken literally. I have met with one who took it so, and from thence con-

<sup>b</sup> *Examen de l'Essai.*

cluded

Mr. POPE's ESSAY ON MAN. 51  
cluded with great Reach of Wit, that SPACE was  
God.

But Mr. Pope having said of God, that he,  
Breathes in our Soul, informs our mortal Part,  
As full, as perfect, in a Hair as Heart :”

the *Commentator* remarks, that “ one should  
“ make a criminal Abuse of these pompous  
“ Expressions, if once launched out, with SPI-  
“ NOZA, to confound the Substance of God  
“ with our own; and to imagine that the Sub-  
“ stance of what we call *Creature*, is the same with  
“ that Being's, to which we give the Name of  
“ *Creator*.” *Spinoza* is still the Burthen of the  
Song. To cut this Matter short, we shall there-  
fore give Mr. Pope's own plain Words and Senti-  
ments, in a Line of this very Essay, that overturn  
all *Spinozism* from its very Foundations: Where,  
speaking of what *Common Sense* taught Mankind,  
before *false Science* had depraved the Understand-  
ing, he says,

THE WORKER FROM THE WORK DISTINCT  
WAS KNOWN,

And simple Reason never sought but one.

Ep. iii. l. 230.

But the *Commentator* is, at every Turn, crying  
out, *A Follower of Spinoza would express himself*  
*just so*. I believe he might; and sure Mr. *Crou-*  
*se* could not be ignorant of the Reason. It being

\* *Commentaire.*

E 2

fo

so well known that that unhappy Man, the better to disguise his Atheism, covered it with such Expressions as kept it long concealed even from those Friends and Acquaintance with whom he most intimately corresponded. Hence it must necessarily happen, that every the best intentioned, most religious Writer will employ many Phrases, that a *Spinozist* would use, in the Explanation of his Impiety.

To persist, therefore, from henceforth, in this Accusation, will deserve a Name, which it is not my Business to bestow.

Mr. *Pope* concludes thus:

Cease then, nor Order Imperfection name:  
Our proper Bliss depends on what we blame.  
Know thy own Point: this kind, this due Degree  
Of Blindness, Weakness, Heav'n bestows on thee.  
Submit.—In this, or any other Sphere,  
Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear:  
Safe in the Hand of one disposing Pow'r,  
Or in the natal, or the mortal Hour.

l. 273, & seq.

“ The Heart gives itself up (says Mr. *De Crou-*  
“ *fax*) to the Magnificence of these Words.—  
“ But I ask Mr. *Pope*, with regard to such con-  
“ solatory Ideas, whether he was not beholden, in  
“ some Measure, to Religion for them<sup>d</sup>?” This  
is in the true Spirit of modern Controversy.—Our  
Logician had taken it into his Head, that the

<sup>d</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 124, 125.

Poet had no Religion; tho' he does not pretend his Proofs rise higher than to a legitimate Suspicion; and finding here a Passage that spoke plainly to the contrary, instead of retracting that rash uncharitable Opinion, he would turn this very Evidence of his own Mistake into a new Proof for the Support of it; and so insinuate, you see, that Mr. Pope had here contradicted himself. He then preaches, for two Pages together, on the Passage, and ends in these Words: "From all this I conclude, that the Verses in Question are altogether edifying in the Mouth of an honest Man, but that they give Scandal and appear profane in the Mouth of an ill one." How exactly can *Rome* and *Geneva* jump on Occasion! So the Conclave adjudged, that those Propositions, which in the Mouth of St. *Austin* were altogether edifying, became scandalous and profane in the Mouth of *Jansenius*.

But the Examiner pursues the Poet to the very End, and cavils even at those Lines, which might have set him right in his Mistakes about the Sense of all the rest.

All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;  
All Chance, Direction which thou canst not see;  
All Discord, Harmony not understood;  
*All partial Evil, universal Good;*  
And spite of Pride, in erring Reason's Spite,  
One Truth is clear, *Whatever is, is RIGHT.*

\* *Commentaire*, p. 127.

E 3

See

“ See (says our *Examiner*) Mr. *Pope*’s general  
 “ Conclusion, *all that is, is right*. So that at the  
 “ Sight of *Charles* the First losing his Head on the  
 “ Scaffold, Mr. *Pope* must have said, *this is right*;  
 “ at the Sight too of his Judges condemning him,  
 “ he must have said, *this is right*; at the Sight of  
 “ some of these Judges, taken and condemned for  
 “ the Action which he had owned to be right, he  
 “ must have cried out, *this is doubly right*†.”

How unaccountable is this Perverseness! Mr. *Pope*, in this very *Epistle* has himself *thus* explained *Whatever is, is right*,

Respecting Man, whatever wrong we call,  
 May, must be right, as relative to *all*.

— So Man, who here seems Principal alone,  
 Perhaps acts Second to some Sphere unknown,  
 Touches some Wheel, or verges to some Gole;  
 ’Tis but a Part we see, and not a Whole.

l. 51, & seq.

But ’tis amazing that the Absurdities arising from the Sense in which the Examiner takes Mr. *Pope*’s grand Principle, *Whatever is, is right*, could not shew him his Mistake: For could any one in his Senses employ a Proposition in a Meaning from whence such evident Absurdities immediately arise? I had observed, that this Conclusion of Mr. *Pope*’s, *that whatever is, is right*, is a Consequence of his Principle, that *partial Evil tends to universal Good*. This shews us the only Sense in which the Propo-

† *Examen de l’Essai.*

sition



sition can be understood, namely, that **WHAT-EVER IS, IS RIGHT, WITH REGARD TO THE DISPOSITION OF GOD, AND TO ITS ULTIMATE TENDENCY.** Now is this any Encouragement to Vice? Or does it take off from the Crime of him who commits it, that God providentially produces Good out of Evil? Had Mr. *Pope* abruptly said in his Conclusion, *the Result of all is, that whatever is, is right,* Mr. *De Crousaz* had even then been inexcusable for putting so absurd a Sense upon the Words; when he might have seen that it was a Conclusion from the general Principle above-mentioned; and therefore must necessarily have another Meaning: But what must we think of him? when the Poet, to prevent Mistakes, had delivered in this very place, the Principle itself, together with this Conclusion as the Consequence of it:

All Discord, Harmony not understood;  
*All partial Evil, universal Good;*  
 And spite of Pride, in erring Reason's Spight,  
 One Truth is clear; *Whatever is, is right.*

I cannot see how he could have told his Reader plainer, that *this Conclusion* was the Consequence of *that Principle*, unless he had wrote **THEREFORE,** in great Church Letters.

Thus have I gone thro' what I found material in Mr. *De Crousaz's Examen and Commentary* on the *first Epistle*: I will only observe, that he has, in several Places, charged Mr. *Pope* with pretended

Absurdities and Impieties, for which his *free* Translator <sup>s</sup> is only answerable. But as he professes not to understand *English*, those Things might have been passed over, had he not had, at the same time, a very exact and excellent Translation in prose <sup>h</sup>, by which he might have discovered the Mistakes of the other. Notwithstanding that, he has chosen to follow a Version abounding in Absurdities; because it gave him frequent Opportunity to calumniate. On this account therefore, it may not be amiss to give an Instance or two of these confederate Misrepresentations, as a Specimen of this Part of the Performance, likewise.

The Translator says,

Il ne desire point cette celeste Flame,

Qui des purs Seraphins devore, et nourrit l'Ame<sup>i</sup>.

That is, the Savage *does not desire that heavenly Flame, which, at the same time that it devours the Souls of pure Seraphims, nourishes them.* Mr. De Croufaz remarks: "Mr. Pope, by exalting the " Fire of his Poetry by an Antithesis, throws, occasionally, his Ridicule on those heavenly Spirits. The *Indian*, says the Poet, contents himself without any thing of that Flame, which devours at the same time that it nourishes." But Mr. Pope is altogether free from this Imputation; nothing can be more grave or sober than his *English* on this Occasion:

<sup>s</sup> Mr. Refnel.

<sup>h</sup> By Mr. De Silhouette.

<sup>i</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 77.

To

To be, contents his natural Desire;  
He asks no Angel's Wing or Seraph's Fire.

l. 105.

But neither, I dare say, did the Translator mean any Thing of Ridicule in his *devore et nourrit l'ame*. It is the sober solid Jargon of the Schools; and Mr. l'Abbé no doubt had frequently heard it from the Benches of the *Sorbonne*. Indeed had a Writer like Mr. Pope used such an Expression, one might have suspected that he was not so serious as he should be.

The Poet, speaking of God's Omnipresence, says,

As full, as perfect, in vile Man that mourns,  
As the rapt Seraph that adores and burns.

l. 269.

Which Mr. l'Abbé has thus translated,

Dans un homme ignore sous une humble chaumiere,  
Que dans le Seraphin, rayonnant de lumiere<sup>k</sup>.

That is, *as well in the ignorant Man, who inhabits an humble Cottage, as in the Seraphim encompassed with Rays of Light*. Our Frenchman here, in good earnest, thought, that a *vile Man that mourned* could be none but some poor Inhabitant of a Country Cottage. Which has betrayed Mr. De Croufaz into this important Remark: "For all that, we sometimes find in Persons of the lowest Rank, a Fund of Probity and Resignation, that preserves them from Contempt; their

<sup>k</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 120.

" Minds

"Minds are indeed but narrow, yet fitted to their Station, &c." But Mr. *Pope* had no such childish Idea in his head. He was opposing here the *human Species* to the *angeli*; and so spoke of *that*, when compared to *this*, as vile and disconsolate. The Force and Beauty of the Reflection depend on this Sense, and, what is more, the Propriety of it; and it is amazing that neither the *Translator* nor the *Critic* could see it. There are many Mistakes of this Nature, both of one and the other, throughout the *Translation* and the *Commentary*, which perhaps we may have occasion to take notice of as we proceed.

In a Word, if it were of such Men as our Commentator that Mr. *Pope* speaks, when he expresses his Contempt for Modern Philosophers, he might well say,

Yes, I despise the Man to Books confin'd,  
Who from his Study rails at human Kind,  
Tho' what he learns he speaks, and may advance  
Some general Maxims, or be right by Chance.

LETTER

## LETTER II.

**H**ARD hath been the Fate of our great Countryman, to fall into the hands of such a *Critic* and *Translator*. We have already seen how *M. De Crousaz* hath discharged himself. I now turn to *M. l'Abbé du Resnel*, whose Sufficiency at least equals the Malice and Calumny of the other; and is attended with just the same Issue.

I have shewn, in my first Letter, that this noble Production of human Wit and Reason is as singular for it's philosophical *Exactness of Method*, as for it's poetical Sublimity of Style.

Yet hear how our Translator descants upon the Matter: "The only reason for which this Poem can be properly termed an *Essay*, is, that the Author has not formed his Plan with all the Regularity of Method which it might have admitted."—And again,—“I would not willingly have made use, in my Version, of any other Liberties than such as the Author himself must have taken, had he attempted a *French* Translation of his own Work; but I was by the unanimous Opinion of all those whom I have consulted on this Occasion, and amongst these, of several

## 60 A COMMENTARY on

“ral *Englisbmen*, compleatly skilled in both Lan-  
 “guages, obliged to follow a different Method.  
 “The French are not satisfied with Sentiments  
 “however beautiful, unless they are methodically  
 “disposed; Method being the Characteristick that  
 “distinguishes our Performances from those of our  
 “Neighbours, and almost the only Excellence  
 “which they agree to allow us. That Mr. Pope  
 “did not think himself confined to a regular  
 “Plan, I have already observed. I have there-  
 “fore by a necessary Compliance with our Taste,  
 “divided it into *five Cantos*<sup>1</sup>.” But the Reader  
 will see presently, that our Translator was so far  
 from being able to judge of Mr. Pope’s Method,  
 that he did not even understand either his Subject or  
 his Sense, on which all Method is to be regulated.

For I now come to the Poet’s *second Epistle*.  
 He had shewn, in the *first*, that the Ways of God  
 are too high for our Comprehension; whence he  
 rightly concludes, that

The proper Study of *Mankind* is *Man*.

This Conclusion, from the Reasoning of the *first*  
 Epistle, he methodically makes the Subject of his  
*Introduction* to the *second*; which treats of *Man’s*  
*Nature*. But here immediately the Accusers of  
 Providence would be apt to object, and say, “Ad-  
 “mit that we had run into an Extreme, while  
 “we pretended to censure or penetrate the De-  
 “signs of Providence, a Matter indeed too high

<sup>1</sup> See Engl. Translation of his Pref.

“ for

“ for us; yet have you gone as far into the Oppo-  
 “ site, while you only send us to the Knowledge  
 “ of ourselves. You must mock us when you  
 “ talk of this as a *Study*; for sure we are inti-  
 “ mately acquainted with ourselves. The pro-  
 “ per Conclusion therefore from your Demon-  
 “ stration of our Inability to comprehend the  
 “ Ways of God, is, that we should turn our-  
 “ selves to the Study of the Frame of NATURE.”  
 Thus, I say, would they be apt to object; for  
 there are no Sort of Men more elate with *Pride*  
 than these *Freethinkers*; the Effects of which the  
 Poet hath so well exposed in his *first* Epistle, es-  
 pecially that Kind of Pride, which consists in a  
 boasted Knowledge of their own Nature. Hence  
 we see the general Argument of the late Books  
 against Religion turns on a supposed Inconsistency  
 between Revelation, and what they presume to  
 call the eternal Dictates of human Nature. The  
 Poet therefore, to convince them that this Study  
 is less easy than they imagine, replies [from l. 2,  
 to 19] to the *first Part* of the Objection, by de-  
 scribing the dark and feeble State of the *human*  
*Understanding*, with regard to the *Knowledge of*  
*ourselves*: And farther, to strengthen this Argu-  
 ment, he shews, in answer to the *second Part* of  
 the Objection [from l. 18 to 31] that the highest  
 Advances in natural Knowledge may be easily ac-  
 quired, and yet we all the while continue very ig-  
 norant of ourselves. For that neither the *clearest*  
 Science, which results from the *Newtonian* Philo-  
 sophy,

sophy, nor the *most sublime*, which is taught by the *Platonic*, will at all assist us in this *Self-Study*; nay, what is more, that Religion itself, when grown *Fanatical and Enthusiastic*, will be equally useless: tho' pure and sober Religion will best instruct us in Man's Nature, that Knowledge being essential to Religion, whose *Subject* is Man, considered in all his Relations, and consequently whose *Object* is God.

To give this *second* Argument its full Force, he illustrates it [from l. 30 to 43] by the noblest Example that ever was in Science, the incomparable NEWTON, whom he makes so superior to *Humanity*, as to represent the *Angelic Beings* in doubt, when they observed him of late unfold all the Law of Nature, whether he was not to be reckon'd in their Number; just as Men, when they see the surprizing Marks of Reason in an *Ape*, are almost tempted to think him of their own Species. Yet this *wondrous Creature*, who saw so far into the Works of *Nature*, could go no farther in *human* Knowledge, than the Generality of his Kind. For which the Poet assigns this very just and adequate Cause: In all other Sciences, the Understanding is uncheck'd and uncontroul'd by any opposite Principle; but in *the Science of Man*, the *Passions* overturn, as fast as *Reason* can build up.

Alas, what Wonder! Man's superior Part  
Uncheck'd may rise, and climb from Art to Art;

But



But when his own great Work is but begun,  
What Reason weaves, by Passion is undone.

This is a brief Account of the Poet's fine Reasoning in his Introduction. The Whole of which his poetical Translator has so miserably mistaken, that, of one of the most strong and best connected Arguments, he has rendered it the most obscure and inconsistent, which even the officious *Commentator* could scarce make worse by his important and candid Remarks. Thus beautifully does Mr. Pope describe Man's Weakness and Blindness, with regard to his own Nature:

— Plac'd on this Isthmus of a middle State,  
A Being darkly wise, and rudely great;  
With too much Knowledge for the Sceptic Side,  
With too much Weakness for the Stoic's Pride,  
He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest;  
In doubt to deem himself a God, or Beast;  
In doubt, his Mind, or Body to prefer,  
Born but to die, and reasoning but to err.

And as he hath given this Description of Man, for the very contrary Purpose to which *Sceptics* are wont to employ such Kind of Paintings, namely, not to deter Men from the Search, but to excite them to the *Discovery* of Truth; he hath, with great Judgment, represented Man as doubting and wavering between the *right* and *wrong* Object; from which State there are great *Hopes* he may be relieved by a careful and circumspect Use of Reason. On the contrary, had he supposed

sed Man so blind as to be busied in chusing, or doubtful in his Choice, between two Objects *equally wrong*, the Case had appeared desperate; and all Study of Man had been effectually *discouraged*. But his Translator not seeing into the Force and Beauty of this Conduct, hath run into the very Absurdity I have here shewn Mr. *Pope* hath so artfully avoided.

The Poet says,

Man hangs between; in doubt to ACT, or REST.

Now he tells us 'tis Man's Duty to *Act*, not to *Rest*, as the *Stoics* thought; and to their Principle this latter Word alludes, he having just before mentioned that *Sect*<sup>m</sup>, whose Virtue, as he says, is

— fix'd as in a Frost;

Contracted all, retiring to the Breast:

But Strength of Mind is EXERCISE, not *Rest*.

l. 92, & seq.

But the Translator is not for mincing Matters.

Seroit-il en naissant *au travail condamné*?

Aux *douceurs du repos* seroit-il destiné!

According to him, Man doubts whether he be condemned to a *slavish Toil and Labour*, or destined to the *Luxury of Repose*; neither of which is the Condition whereto Providence designed him. This therefore contradicts the Poet's whole Purpose, which is to recommend the Study of Man,

<sup>m</sup> With too much Weakness for the *Stoic's* Pride.

on a Supposition that it will enable him to determine *rightly* in his *Doubts* between the *true* and *false* Object. 'Tis on this Account he says,

Alike in Ignorance, his Reason such,  
Whether he thinks too *little*, or too *much*;  
Chaos of Thought and Passion, all confus'd,  
Still by *himself abus'd*, or *disabus'd*.

*i. e.* the proper Sphere of his Reason is so narrow, and the Exercise of it so nice, that the too immoderate Use of it is attended with the same Ignorance that proceeds from the not using it at all. Yet, tho' in both these Cases, he is *abused by himself*, he has it still in his own Power to *disabuse himself*, in making his *Passions* subservient to the *Means*, and regulating his *Reason* by the *End of Life*. Mr. De Crousaz himself had some Glimmering of the Absurdity of those two Lines of the Translator: And because he shall not say, I allow him to have said nothing reasonable throughout his whole *Commentary*, I will here transcribe his very Words: "Ce  
" qui fait encore, que les Antitheses frappent au  
" lieu d'instruire, c'est qu'elles sont outrées.  
" *L'Homme nait-il condamné au travail? Doit-il*  
" *se permettre la mollesse et le repos?* Quel sujet de  
" decouragement ou de trouble, si l'on n'avoit de  
" choix qu'entre deux partis si contraires? Mais  
" nous ne naissons ni destinés à un repos oisif, ni  
" condamnés à un travail accablant et inhumain."  
p. 138.

F

Again,

Again, Mr. Pope,

In doubt to deem himself a *God*, or *Beast*.

i. e. He doubts, as appears from the Line immediately following this °, whether his Soul be *Mortal* or *Immortal*; one of which is the Truth, namely, its Immortality, as the Poet himself teaches, when he speaks of the Omnipresence of God:

Breathes in our *Soul*, informs our *mortal* Part.

1 Ep. l. 267.

The Translator, as we say, unconscious of the Poet's Purpose, rambles, as before:

Tantôt de son esprit admirant l'Excellence,  
Il pense qu'il est Dieu, qu'il en a la puissance;  
Et tantôt gemissant des besoins de son Corps,  
Il croit que de la brute, il n'a que les resorts.

Here his Head (turned to a sceptical View) was running on the different Extravagances of *Plato* in his *Divinity*, and of *Des Cartes* in his *Philosophy*. Sometimes, says he, Man thinks himself a *real God*, and sometimes again a *meer Machine*; Things quite out of Mr. Pope's Thoughts in this Place.

Again, the Poet, in a beautiful Allusion to the Sentiments and Words of *Scripture*, breaks out into this just and moral Reflection upon *Man's* Condition here,

Born but to die, and reasoning but to err.

• In doubt his *Mind* or *Body* to prefer.

The

The Translator turns this fine and sober Thought into the most outrageous Scepticism ;

Ce n'est que pour mourir, qu'il est né, qu'il respire,  
Et tout sa raison n'est presque qu'un delire :

and so makes his Author directly contradict himself, where he says of Man, that he hath

— too much Knowledge for the Sceptic Side.

Strange! that the Translator could not see his Author's Meaning was, that, as we are *born to die* and yet enjoy some small Portion of Life; so, tho' we *reason to err*, yet we comprehend some few Truths. Strange! that he could not see the Difference between that weak State of Reason, in which Error mixes itself with all its true Conclusions concerning Man's Nature; and an *abstract Quality, which we vainly call Reason, but which*, he tells us, *is indeed scarce any thing else but Madness*. One would think he paid little Attention to the concluding Words of this sublime Description, where the Poet tells us, Man was

Created *half to rise*, and half to fall;  
Great Lord of all Things, yet a Prey to all;  
Sole Judge of Truth, in endless Error hurl'd :  
The Glory, Jest, and Riddle of the World.

Indeed he paid so much, as to contrive how he might pervert them to a Sense consistent with his

Et tout sa raison n'est presque qu'un delire :  
Which he does in these Words :

Tantôt feu, tantôt sage, il change A CHAQUE INSTANT.

This is indeed making a *Madman* of this *sole Judge of Truth*, to all Intents and Purposes. But Mr. *Pepe* says nothing of his *changing every Moment from Sage to Fool*; he only says, that Folly and Wisdom are the inseparate Partage of *Humanity*: Which is quite another Thing.

But *Mistakes*, like *Misfortunes*, seldom come single; and the reason is the same, in both cases, because they influence one another. For the Translator, having mistaken both the *Nature* and *End* of the Description of the Weakness of human Nature, imagined the Poet's *second* Argument for the Difficulty of the *Study of Man*, which shews, that the *clearest* and *sublimest* Science is no Assistance to it, nor even Religion itself, when grown *Fanatical and Enthusiastic*; he imagined, I say, that this fine Argument was an *Illustration* only of the foregoing Description, in which Illustration, Instances were given of the several *Extravagances in false Science*; whereas the Poet's Design was, just the contrary, to shew the prodigious Vigour of the human Mind, in Studies which do not relate to itself; and yet that all its Force together with those Effects of it, avail little in this Inquiry.

But there was another Cause of the *Translator's* Error; he had mistaken, as we say, the Poet's *first* Argument for a Description of the Weakness of the human Mind with regard to *all Truth*; where-

as

as it is only such with regard to the *Knowledge of Man's Nature*. This led him, as it would seem, to conclude, that, if Mr. Pope were to be understood as speaking *here* in his *second* Argument, of real and great Progress in *Science*, it would *contradict* what had been said in the Description; and therefore, out of *Tenderness* to his Author, he turns it all to imaginary *Hypotheses*.

Let us take the whole Context.

I.

Go wondrous Creature! mount where Science guides,

Go measure Earth, weigh Air, and state the Tides;  
Shew by what Laws the wand'ring Planets stray,  
Correct old Time, and teach the Sun his Way.

II.

Go soar, with *Plato*, to th'Empyrean Sphere,  
To the first Good, first Perfect, and first Fair;

III.

Or tread the mazy Round his Follow'rs trod,  
And quitting Sense call imitating God.

Go teach eternal Wisdom how to rule,  
Then drop into thyself, and be a Fool.

Mr. Pope says, *Go, wondrous Creature*; and he never speaks at random. The Reason of his giving Man this Epithet is, because, tho' he be, as the Poet says, in another Place <sup>†</sup>, *little less than Angel* in his Faculties of Science, yet is he miserably

<sup>†</sup> Ep. i. l. 166.

blind in the Knowledge of himself. But the *Translator* not apprehending the Poet's Thought, imagined it was said ironically, and so translates it;

Va, sublime Mortel, fier de ton Excellence,  
Ne crois rien d'impossible à ton Intelligence.

Mr. Pope —

— Mount where Science guides,  
Go measure Earth, weigh Air, and state the Tides;  
Shew by what Laws the wand'ring Planets stray;  
Correct old Time, and teach the Sun his Way.

This is a *Description* of the *real* Advances in Science, such as the *Newtonian*. And the very Introduction to it, — *Mount where Science guides*, shews it to be so.

But the Translator, carried away with the Fancy of its being an *Illustration* of the foregoing Description, turns the Whole to *vain, false, imaginary* Science, such as that of *Des Cartes*:

Le Compas à la main, mesure l'univers;  
Regle à ton gré le flux et le reflux des mers;  
Fixe le poids de l'air, et commande aux planetes;  
Determine le cours de leurs marches secretes;  
Soumets à ton calcul l'Obscurité des tems,  
Et de l'Astre du jour conduis les movemens.

Here, in order to add the greater ridicule to his false Sense, he introduces the Philosopher, *with Compass in hand, measuring the Universe*, mimicking the Office of God in the Act of Creation, as he is represented by the Ancients, who used to say,  
Ὁ Θεὸς γινώσκων. Whereas Mr. Pope's Words are,

Go



*Go measure Earth—*

Alluding to the noble and useful Project of the modern Mathematicians to measure a Degree at the Equator and the polar Circle, in order to determine the true Figure of the Earth, of great Importance to Astronomy and Navigation.

*Regulate*, says he, *according to your own Will, the Flux and Reflux of the Sea*; and this, *Des Cartes* presumed to do: But it was *Newton* that *stated the Tides*. It is the pretended Philosopher that *fixes the Weight of the Air*; but the real Philosopher that *weighs Air*. It was *Des Cartes* that *commanded the Planets*, and determined them to roll according to his own good *Pleasure*; but it was *Newton* who

*Shew'd by what Laws the wand'ring Planets stray.*

*Submit*, says the Translator, *the Obscurity of Time to your Calculation*.—The Poet says,

*Correct old Time—*

He is here still speaking of *Newton*. *Correct old Time*, alludes to that great Man's *Grecian Chronology*, which he reformed on those two sublime Conceptions, the *Difference between the Reigns of Kings*, and the *Generations of Men*, and the *Positions of the Colures of the Equinoxes and Solstices*, at the time of the *Argonautic Expedition*.

And when the Translator comes to the *third Instance*, which is that of *false Religion*, he introduceth it thus,

Et joignant la folie à la temerité.

Which shews how ill he understood Mr. *Pope's* Instances of the *Natural Philosophy* of *Newton*, and the *Metaphysical Philosophy* of *Plato*. And yet all the Justness, the Force, and Sublimity of the Poet's Reasoning consist in a right Apprehension of them.

Mr. *Pope*—

Go teach Eternal Wisdom how to rule,  
Then drop into thyself, and be a Fool.

These *two* Lines have only contributed to keep the Translator in his Error; for he took the *first* of them to be a *Recapitulation* of all that had been said from l. 18. Whereas *both* of them together, are a *Conclusion* from it, to this Effect: "Go now, "vain Man, elated with thy Acquirements in "real Science and *imaginary* Intimacy with God; "Go and run into all the Extravagances I have exploded in the first Epistle, *where* thou pretendedst "to teach Providence how to govern; then drop "into the Obscurities of thy own Nature, and "thereby manifest thy Ignorance and Folly."

Mr. *Pope* then confirms and illustrates this Reasoning by one of the greatest Examples that ever was:

Superior Beings, when of late they saw  
A mortal Man unfold all Nature's Law,  
Admir'd such Wisdom in an earthly Shape,  
And shew'd a NEWTON, as we shew an *Ape*.

In these Lines he speaks to this Effect.—"But  
"to make you fully sensible of the Difficulty of  
"this Study, I shall instance in the great *Newton*  
"himself

“ himself; whom, when superior Beings, not  
 “ long since, saw capable of unfolding the whole  
 “ Law of Nature, they were in doubt whether  
 “ the Owner of such prodigious Science should  
 “ not be reckoned of their own Order; just as  
 “ Men, when they see the surprising Marks of  
 “ Reason in an Ape, are almost tempted to rank  
 “ him with their own Kind. And yet this won-  
 “ drous Man could go no farther in the Know-  
 “ ledge of his own Nature, than the Generality  
 “ of his Species.”

Thus stands the Argument, in which the Poet  
 has paid a higher Compliment to the great *Newton*,  
 as well as a more ingenious, than was ever  
 yet paid him by any of his most zealous Followers:  
 Yet the Translator, now quite in the dark, by  
 Mistake upon Mistake, imagined his Design was to  
 depreciate *Newton's* Knowledge, and to humble the  
 Pride of his Followers: Which hath made him  
 play at cross Purposes with his Original:

Des celestes Esprits la vive Intelligence  
 Regarde avec pitie notre foible Science;  
*Newton*, le grand *Newton*, que nos admirons tous,  
 Est peut-etre pour eux, ce qu'un Singe est pour nous.

“ The heavenly Spirits, whose Understanding is  
 “ so far superior to ours, look down with Pity on  
 “ the Weakness of human Science; *Newton*, the  
 “ great *Newton*, whom we so much admire, is  
 “ perhaps in no higher Esteem with them, than  
 “ an Ape is with us.”

But it is not their *Pity*, but their *Admiration* that  
 is

is the Subject in Question: And it was for no slight Cause they admired; it was to see *a mortal Man unfold the whole Law of Nature*; which, by the way, might have shewn the Translator, that the Poet was speaking of *real Science* in the foregoing Paragraph. Nor was it Mr. Pope's Intention to bring any of the Ape's *Qualities*, but its *Sagacity* into the Comparison. But why the *Ape's*, it may be said, rather than the Sagacity of some more decent Animal; particularly *the half-reasoning Elephant*, as the Poet calls it, which, as well on Account of this its Superiority, as for its having no ridiculous Side, like the *Ape*, on which it could be viewed, seems better to have deserved this Honour? I reply, Because as none but a Shape resembling human, accompanied with great Sagacity, could occasion the Doubt of that Animal's relation to Man, the Ape only having that Resemblance, no other Animal was fitted for the Comparison. And on this Ground of Relation the whole Beauty of the Thought depends; *Newton*, and those superior Beings being equally immortal Spirits, tho' of different Orders. And here let me take notice of a new Species of the *Sublime*, of which our Poet may be justly said to be the Maker; so new that we have yet no Name for it, tho' of a Nature distinct from every other poetical Excellence. The two great Perfections of Works of Genius are *Wit* and *Sublimity*. Many Writers have been *witty*, several have been *sublime*, and some few have even possessed both these

Qualities

Qualities *separately*. But none that I know of, besides our Poet, hath had the Art to *incorporate* them. Of which he hath given many Examples, both in this Essay, and in his other Poems. One of the noblest being the Passage in Question. This seems to be the last Effort of the Imagination, to poetical Perfection. And in this compounded Excellence the Wit receives a *Dignity* from the Sublime, and the Sublime a *Splendour* from the Wit; which, in their State of separate Existence, they both wanted.

To return, This Mistake seems to have led both the *Translator* and *Commentator* into a much worse; into a strange Imagination that Mr. *Pope* had here reflected upon Sir *Isaac Newton's* moral Character; which the Poet was as far from doing, as the Philosopher was from deserving: For,

After Mr. *Pope* had shewn, by this illustrious Instance, that a great Genius might make prodigious Advances in the Knowledge of *Nature*, and at the same time remain very ignorant of *himself*, he gives a Reason for it:—In all other Sciences the Understanding has no opposite Principle to cloud and bias it; but in the Knowledge of Man, the *Passions* obscure as fast as *Reason* can clear up.

Could he, whose *Rules the rapid Comet bind*,  
Describe, or fix, one Movement of the Mind?  
Who saw those Fires *here rise, and there descend*?,  
Explain his own Beginning, or his End?

¶ Sir *Isaac Newton* in calculating the *Velocity* of a *Comet's* Motion, and the Course it describes, when it  
Alas,

Alas, what Wonder ! Man's superior Part  
 Uncheck'd may rise, and climb from Art to Art ;  
 But when his Own great Work is but begun,  
 What Reason weaves, by Passion is undone.

Here we see, at the fifth Line, the Poet turns from *Newton*, and speaks of *Man* and his *Nature* in general. But the *Translator* applies all that follows to that Philosopher :

Toi qui jusques aux cieux oses porter ta vue,  
 Qui crois en concevoir et l'ordre et l'étendue,  
 Toi qui veux dans leur cours, leur prescrire la loi,  
 Sçais-tu régler ton cœur, sçais-tu regner sur toi ?  
 Ton esprit qui sur tout vainement se fatigue,  
 Avidé de sçavoir, ne connoit point de digue ;  
 De quoi par ses travaux s'est-il rendu certain ?  
 Peut-il te decouvrir ton principe et ta fin ?

On which the *Commentator* thus candidly remarks ;  
 “ It is not to be disputed, but that whatever Pro-  
 “ gress a great Genius hath made in Science, he  
 “ deserves rather Censure than Applause, if he has  
 “ spent that Time in barren Speculations, curi-  
 “ ous indeed, but of little Use, which he should  
 “ have employ'd to know himself, *his Beginning*

becomes visible in its Descent to, and Ascent from the Sun, conjectured, with the highest Appearance of Truth, that they revolve perpetually round the Sun, in *Ellipses* vastly excentrical, and very nearly approaching to *Parabolas*. In which he was greatly confirmed, in observing between two Comets a Coincidence in their *Perihelions*, and a perfect Agreement in their Velocities.

“ and

“ *and his End, and how to regulate his Conduct;*  
 “ *and if, instead of that Candour and Humanity,*  
 “ *and Desire to oblige, Virtues so becoming our*  
 “ *Nature, he be over-run with Ambition, Envy,*  
 “ *and a Rage of Preheminence, whose Violence*  
 “ *and Rancour are attended with the most scan-*  
 “ *dalous Effects, of which there are too many*  
 “ *Instances: Vices which Mr. Newton liv'd and*  
 “ *died an entire Stranger to*.”

I have transcribed this Passage to expose the malignant Motives the *Commentator* appears to have had in writing against the *Essay on Man*. As to the *Translator*, it would be indeed harder to know what Motives he could have in translating it, for it is plain he did not understand it. Yet this is he who tells us, that *the Author of the Essay has not formed his Plan with all the Regularity of Method which it might have admitted, that he was oblig'd to follow a different Method; for that the French are not satisfied with Sentiments however beautiful, unless they be methodically disposed, Method being the Characteristic that distinguishes their Performances from those of their Neighbours.*

Thus neither did the *Critic*, nor *Translator*, suspect (and never were poor Men so miserably bit) that

Those oft' are Stratagems which Errors seem,  
 Nor is it *Homer* nods, but we that dream.

The poetical *Translator* could not imagine so great a Poet would pique himself upon close Rea-

“ *Commentaire, p. 147.*

soning;

soning; and the fastidious Philosopher, of course, concluded, that a Man of so much Wit could hardly reason well; so neither of them gave a proper Attention to the Poet's System. A System logically close, tho' wrote in Verse, and complete, tho' studiously concise: This second Epistle particularly (the Subject of the present Letter) containing the truest, clearest, shortest, and consequently the best Account of the Origin, Use, and End of the Passions, that is, in my Opinion, any where to be met with. Which I now proceed to consider, in the same strict Manner I have scrutinized the *Introduction*. For our Poet's Works want nothing but to be fairly examined by the severest Rules of Logic and good Philosophy, to become as illustrious for their Sense, as they have long been for their Wit and Poetry.

I go on therefore to the Body of the Discourse; which, as plain as it is, I find Mr. *De Croufaz* has made a Shift (tho' extremely free with his Insinuations of Irreligion and *Spinozism*) to mistake from End to End. So true is the old Saying, *Hominem imperito nihil est iniquius*.

The Poet having thus shewn the Difficulty attending the *Study of Man*, proceeds to our Assistance in laying before us the *Elements* or true *Principle* of this *Science*, in an Account of the Origin, Use and End of the Passions. He begins [from l. 42 to 49] with pointing out the *two* grand *Principles* in human Nature, SELF-LOVE and REASON. Describes their *general* Nature: The first *sets* Man upon



upon acting, the other *regulates his Action*. However, these Principles are *natural*, not *moral*: And, therefore, *in themselves*, neither good nor bad; but *so*, only as they are *directed*.

Nor this a *good*, nor that a *bad* we call,  
Each works its End, to move or govern all;  
And to their *proper* Operation still  
Ascribe all *Good*, to their *improper*, *Ill*.

This Observation is made with great Judgment, in Opposition to the desperate Folly of those *Fanatics*, who, as the *Ascetic*, pretend to eradicate *Self-Love*; as the *Mystic*, would stifle *Reason*; and both, on the absurd Fancy of their being *moral*, not *natural* Principles.

The Poet proceeds [from l. 48 to 57] more minutely to mark out the distinct Offices of these *two Principles*, which he had before assigned only in *general*; and here he shews their *Necessity*; for without *Self-Love*, as the *Spring*, Man would be *unactive*, and without *Reason*, as the *Balance*, active to *no Purpose*.

Fixt like a Plant on his peculiar Spot,  
To draw Nutrition, propagate, and rot:  
Or Meteor like flame lawless thro' the Void,  
Destroying others, by himself destroy'd.

Having thus explained the *Ends* and *Offices* of each Principle, he goes on [from l. 56 to 69] to speak of their *Qualities*: And shews how they are fitted to discharge those Functions, and answer their respective *Intentions*. The Business of *Self-Love*

*Love* being to excite to Action, it is quick and impetuous; and moving instinctively, has, like *Attraction*, its Force prodigiously increased as the Object approaches, and proportionably lessen'd as that recedes. On the contrary, *Reason*, like the *Author of Attraction*, is always calm and sedate, and equally preserves itself, whether the Object be near, or far off. Hence the *moving Principle* is made more *strong*; tho' the *restraining*, be more *quickfighted*. The Consequence he draws from this is, that, if we would not be carried away to our Destruction, we must always keep Reason upon Guard.

But it would be objected, that if this Account be true, human Life would be *most* miserable, and, even in the wisest, a perpetual Conflict between *Reason* and the *Passions*. To this therefore the Poet replies [from l. 68 to 71.] *First*, that Providence has so graciously contrived, that even in the voluntary Exercise of *Reason*, as in the mere mechanic Motion of a Limb, *Habit* makes that, which was at first done with Pain, easy and natural. And *secondly*, that the *Experience* gained by the long Exercise of *Reason* goes a great Way towards *eluding* the Force of *Self-love*. Now, the *attending to Reason*, as here recommended, will gain us this *Habit* and *Experience*.

*Attention*, Habit and Experience gains;

Each strengthens Reason, and Self-love restrains.

Hence it appears, that this Station in which Reason

son is to be kept constantly upon Guard, is not so uneasy a one as may be at first imagined.

From this Description of *Self-love* and *Reason* it follows, as the Poet observes [from l. 70 to 83] that both conspire to one *End*, namely *human Happiness*, tho' they be not equally expert in the Choice of the Means; the Difference being this, that the *first* hastily seizes every thing which has the *Appearance* of Good; the *other* weighs and examines whether it *be indeed* what it appears.

This shews, as he next observes, the Folly of the *Schoolmen*, who consider them as two *opposite* Principles, the one *Good* and the other *Ill*: The Observation is seasonable and judicious; for this dangerous *School-Opinion* gives great Support to the *Manichean* or *Zoroastran* Error, the Confutation of which was one of the Author's chief Ends of Writing. For if there be two Principles in Man, a *good* and *bad*, it is natural to think him the joint Product of the two *Manichean* Deities (the first of which contributed to his *Reason*, the other to his *Passions*) rather than the Creature of *one individual Cause*. This was *Plutarch's* Notion, and, as we may see in him, of the more ancient *Manicheans*. It was of Importance therefore to reprobate and subvert a Notion that served to the Support of so dangerous an Error. And this the Poet has done with more Force and Clearness than is often to be found in whole Volumes wrote against that heretical Opinion:

G

Let

Let subtle Schoolmen teach these Friends to fight,  
 More studious to *divide*, than to unite;  
 And Grace and Virtue, Sense and Reason split,  
 With all the rash Dexterity of Wit.

But the *French* Translator has mistaken these Lines for a Reflection, not on the *Theology*, as Mr. *Pope* intended them, but on the *Logic* of the *Schools*, with which the Poet had here nothing to do. This, it is true, delights in *Distinctions* without *Difference*, which is indeed a Fault, but not of so high Malignity as the other: *that*, which the Poet censures, leading directly into Error; *this*, which his Translator reproves, only hindering our Progress in Truth or Science.

Qu'un Scholaistique vain cherchant à discourir  
 Cache la Verité loin de la découvrir,  
 Que, par un long tissu d'Argumens inutiles,  
 Par des tours ambigus, par des raisons inutiles,  
 Voulant tout diviser jusques à l'infini,  
 Il separe avec art ce qui doit être uni.

Now, tho' this Fault in the *Logic of the Schools* be universally owned and condemned by all out of them, and by no one more than by Mr. *De Crou-saz* himself, in his Books of *Logic*, yet in pure Contradiction to Mr. *Pope*, who, as he thought, had condemned it, he could not forbear saying, *A Poet may happen to write with more Elegance than a Schoolman, and yet for all that not be able to express himself with more Justness and Precision*†.

† *Commentaire*, p. 152.

The Poet having given this Account of the Nature of *Self-love* in *general*, comes now to *anatomize* it, in a Discourse of the PASSIONS, which he aptly names the *Modes of Self-love*; the Object of all these, he shews [from l. 82 to 91] is *Good*; and when under the Guidance of Reason, *real Good*; either of our own, or of another; for some *Goods* not being capable of Division or Communication, and *Reason*, at the same time directing us to provide for ourselves, we therefore, in pursuit of these Objects, sometimes aim at *our own Good*, sometimes at the Good of *others*; when fairly aiming at our own, the *Passion* is call'd *Prudence*, when at another's, *Virtue*.

Hence (as he shews from l. 90 to 95) appears the Folly of the *Stoics*, who would *eradicate* the Passions, Things so necessary both to the Good of the *Individual*, and of the *Kind*. Which preposterous Method of promoting Virtue, he therefore very reasonably reproveth. But as it was from Observation of the Evils occasion'd by the Passions, that the *Stoics* thus extravagantly projected their Extirpation, the Poet recurs [from l. 94 to 101] to his grand Principle, so often before, and to so good Purpose, insisted on, that

— *partial Ill is universal Good*;

and shews, that, tho' the Tempest of the Passions, like that of the Air, may tear and ravage some few Parts of Nature in its Passage, yet the salutary Agitation produced by it preserves the whole in Life and Vigour. This is his *first* Argument against

the *Stoics*, which he illustrates by a very beautiful Similitude, on a Hint taken from Scripture Story<sup>x</sup>:

Nor God alone in the *still Calm* we find,  
He mounts the *Storm*, and walks upon the Wind.  
But the Translator, not taking this Allusion, has turn'd it thus:

Dieu lui-même, Dieu sort de *son profond repos*.  
And so has made an *Epicurean* God of the Governor of the Universe, of whom Scripture afforded Mr. *Pope* this grand and sublime Idea.— Mr. *De Croufaz* does not spare this Expression of *God's coming out of his profound Repose*.— It is (says he) *excessively poetical*, and presents us with Ideas which we ought not to dwell upon. But when he goes on— (*there is nothing in God's directing the Storm which can authorise the Passions that disturb our Happiness*<sup>y</sup>) he talks very impertinently. Mr. *Pope* is not here arguing from *Analogy*, that as God raises and heightens the *Storm*, so should we raise and heighten the *Passions*. The Words are only a simple Affirmation in the poetic Dress of a Similitude, to this Purpose.— “ Good is not only “ produced by the Subdual of the Passions, but “ by the turbulent Exercise of them :”

Nor God alone in the *still Calm* we find,  
He mounts the *Storm*, and walks upon the Wind.  
A Truth conveyed under the most sublime Image:

<sup>x</sup> 1 *Kings* xix. 11, 12.

<sup>y</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 158.

ry that Poetry could conceive or paint. For he is here only shewing the providential Effects of the Passions, and how, by *God's* gracious Disposition, they are turned away from their natural Biases, to promote the Happiness of Mankind. As to the Method in which they are to be treated by *Man*, in whom they are found, all that he contends for, in favour of them, is only this, that they should not be quite rooted up and destroyed, as the *Stoics*, and their Followers in all Religions, foolishly attempted. For the rest, he constantly repeats this Advice:

The Action of the *Stronger* to suspend,  
 REASON still use, to REASON still attend.

His *second* Argument against the *Stoics* [from l. 100 to 113] is, that *Passions* go to the Composition of a *moral Character*, just as *Elementary Particles* go to the Composition of an *organized Body*: Therefore, for Man to go about to destroy what composes his very Being, is the Height of Extravagance: 'Tis true, he tells us that these *Passions* which in their natural State, like *Elements*, are in perpetual Jar, must be tempered, softened, and united in order to perfect the Work of the *great plastic Artist*; who, in this Office, employs human Reason: Whose Business it is to follow the *Road of Nature*, and to observe the *Dictates of the Deity*. Follow her and God. The Use and Importance of this Precept is evident: For in doing the *first*, she will discover the Absurdity of attempting to eradicate the Passions; in doing the

G 3 *second,*

*second*, she will learn how to make them subservient to the Interest of Virtue:

Suffice that Reason keep to *Nature's Road*,  
 Subject, compound them, follow *her* and *God*.  
 Love, Hope, and Joy, fair Pleasure's smiling Train,  
 Hate, Fear, and Grief, the Family of Pain,  
 These mixt with Art, and to due Bounds confin'd,  
 Make and maintain the Ballance of the Mind.

His *third* Argument against the *Stoics* [from l. 112 to 117] is, that the Passions occasion in us a perpetual Excitement to the Pursuit of Happiness; which without these powerful Inciters we should neglect, in an insensible Indolence. Now *Happiness* is the *End* of our Creation; and this *Excitement* the *Means* of *Happiness*: Therefore these Movers, the *Passions*, are the Instruments of God, which he has put into the Hands of Reason, to work withal:

Pleasures are ever in our Hands or Eyes,  
 And when in Act they cease, in Prospect rise;  
 Present to grasp, and future still to find,  
 The whole Employ of Body and of Mind.

The Poet then proceeds in his Subject; and this last Observation leads him naturally to the Discussion of his next Principle. He shews then, that tho' all the *Passions* have their Turn in swaying the Determinations of the Mind, yet every Man has one MASTER PASSION that at length stifles or absorbs all the rest. The *Fact* he illustrates at large, in the *first Epistle of his second Book*



*Book.* Here [from l. 116 to 132] he gives us the *Cause* of it: "Those Pleasures or Goods, which  
" are the Objects of the Passions, affect the Mind,  
" by striking on the Senses; but, as thro' the  
" Formation of the Organs of the human Frame,  
" every Man has some Sense stronger and more  
" acute than others, the Object, which strikes that  
" stronger or acuter Sense, whatever it be, will be  
" the Object most desired; and, consequently, the  
" Pursuit of that will be the *ruling Passion*:"

All spread their Charms, but charm not all alike,  
On diff'rent Senses, diff'rent Objects strike;  
Hence diff'rent Passions more or less inflame,  
As strong, or weak, the Organs of the Frame;  
And hence one *Master Passion* in the Breast,  
Like *Aaron's* Serpent swallows all the rest.

—that the Difference of Force in this *ruling Passion* shall at first, perhaps, be very small or even imperceptible; but *Nature*, *Habit*, *Imagination*, *Wit*, nay even *Reason* itself shall assist its Growth, 'till it hath at length drawn and converted every other into itself.

All this is delivered in a Strain of Poetry so wonderfully sublime, as suspends for a while the *ruling Passion* in every Reader, and ingrosses his whole Admiration:

As Man, perhaps, the Moment of his Breath  
Receives the lurking Principle of Death;  
The young Disease, that must subdue at length,  
Grows with his Growth, and strengthens with  
his Strength:

So, cast and mingled with his very Frame,  
 The Mind's Disease, it's RULING PASSION came:  
 Each vital Humour which should feed the whole,  
 Soon flows to this, in Body and in Soul;  
 Whatever warms the Heart, or fills the Head,  
 As the Mind opens, and its Functions spread,  
 Imagination plies her dang'rous Art,  
 And pours it all upon the peccant Part.  
 Nature its Mother, Habit is its Nurse;  
*Wit*, Spirit, Faculties, but make it worse;  
*Reason itself* but gives it Edge and Pow'r,  
 As Heav'n's blest Beam turns Vinegar more sour\*.

This naturally leads the Poet to lament the *Weakness and Insufficiency of human Reason* [from l. 138 to 151] and the honest Purpose he had in so doing, was, plainly to intimate the Necessity of a more sublime Dispensation to Mankind:

We, wretched Subjects, tho' to lawful Sway,  
 In this weak Queen some Fav'rite still obey.  
 Ah! if she lend not *Arms* as well as Rules,  
 What can she more than tell us we are Fools?

\* The Poet in some other of his *Epistles* gives Examples of the Doctrine and Precepts here delivered. Thus in that of the Use of Riches, he has illustrated this Truth in the Character of *Cotta*:

Old *Cotta* sham'd his Fortune and his Birth,  
*Yet was not Cotta void of Wit or Worth.*  
 What tho' (the Use of barb'rous Spits forgot)  
 His Kitchen vied in Coolness with his Grot?  
 If *Cotta* liv'd on Pulse, *it was no more*  
*Than Bramins, Saints, and Sages did before.*

Teach

Teach us to mourn our Nature, not to mend,  
A sharp Accuser, but a helpless Friend!

St. *Paul* himself did not chuse to employ other Arguments, when disposed to give us the highest Idea of the Usefulness of *Christianity*<sup>a</sup>. But, it may be, the Poet finds a Remedy in *natural Religion*: Far from it. He here leaves Reason unrelieved. What is this then but an Intimation that we ought to seek for a Cure in that Religion which only dares profess to give it?

But Mr. *De Crousaz* says, the Poet, in this Representation of human Reason, has contradicted what he said of it in the 80<sup>th</sup> and 98<sup>th</sup> Lines of this Epistle. And, possessed with this Notion, he goes on, in his declamatory Way, so unworthy a grave Logician: *Does Mr. Pope take a Pleasure in blowing hot and cold, in giving us successively the Sweet and Bitter, to reduce us to such a State that we mayn't know what to stick to? If there be no ill Design at Bottom in these Contradictions, but that they only spring from the imprudent Custom, established in the Schools, of talking Pro and Con, &c*<sup>b</sup>. And then tells an idle common-place Story of Cardinal *Perren*. In the mean time it happens that this is no Contradiction at all, or, if it be, it is that very Contradiction into which St. *Paul* likewise fell, when he so continually recommended the Use of Reason, and yet so energetically described

<sup>a</sup> See his *Epistle to the Romans*, c. vii.

<sup>b</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 166.

its Imbecillity and Impotence. But as our *Logician* said before, on a like Occasion, *this might be edifying in a good Man, yet give Scandal in an ill one.*

To proceed, as it appears from the Account here given of the *ruling Passion*, and its *Cause*, which results from the Structure of the Organs, that it is the *Road of Nature*, the Poet shews [from l. 150 to 157] that this Road is to be followed. So that the Office of Reason is not to direct us what Passion to exercise, but to assist us in RECTIFYING, and keeping within due Bounds, that which Nature hath so strongly impressed; for that

A mightier Pow'r the strong Direction sends,  
And sev'ral Men impels to sev'ral Ends.

Here Mr. *De Croufæz* pours out the full Stream of his Candour and Politeness, in his Criticism on these Lines:

Yet Nature's Road must ever be prefer'd;  
Reason is here no Guide, but still a Guard;  
'Tis her's to RECTIFY, not overthrow,  
And treat *this Passion* more as Friend than Foe.

*The only Refuge I have here left (says he) is to suppose that Mr. Pope thought the very Mention of this Notion would be sufficient to expose the Absurdity and Horror of it, and of those who regulate their Conduct on such unrighteous and shocking Ideas. And I conceive I should do M. l'Abbe de Sep-Fontaines much Injustice, if I did not believe this was his*

his Intention in translating this Passage. But, to have a more perfect Idea of the Ridicule and Horror of it, let us put the Words into the Mouth of a Confessor, &c.<sup>c</sup> And so he goes gayly on<sup>d</sup>, to represent a ghostly Father encouraging his Penitents in their several Vices on Mr. Pope's pretended Principles. But we shall spoil his Mirth, by only assuring him, that the Poet's Precept can have no other Meaning than this, "That as the ruling Passion is implanted by Nature, it is Reason's Office to regulate, direct, and restrain, but not to overthrow it. To regulate the Passion of Avarice, for instance, into a parsimonious Disposition of the public Revenues; to direct the Passion of Love, whose Object is Worth and Beauty,

"To the first Good, first Perfect, and first Fair<sup>e</sup>, as his Master Plato advises; and to restrain Spleen, to a Contempt and Hatred of Vice." This is what the Poet meant, and what every unprejudiced Man could not but see he must needs mean, by RECTIFYING THE MASTER PASSION, tho' he had not confined us to this Sense, in the Reason he gives of his Precept, in these Words:

A mightier Pow'r the strong Direction sends,  
And sev'ral Men impels to sev'ral Ends.

<sup>c</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 170.

<sup>d</sup> *Ib.* 171, 172.

<sup>e</sup> Τὸ καλὸν—τ' ἀγαθόν.

For

For what Ends are they which God impels to, but the Ends of Virtue?

But for a *more perfect Idea* (to speak in his own free Terms) of the *Ridicule* of our Logician's Comment, let us attend to what he remarks on these two last Lines. *These Words* (says he) *may be understood in more than one Sense, which is not rare, and may have a more or less restrained Meaning* They are *susceptible of a Sense extravagant and injurious to Providence, and they will admit of a reasonable one, and very worthy our Attention*<sup>f</sup>. Here, we see, he doubts about the Meaning of the *Reason* of the Precept; admits it may have a good one; and yet condemns, without Hesitation, and in the grossest and most shocking Terms, the *Precept* itself; whose Meaning must yet, according to all rational Rules, even those of his own Logic, if it have any such, be determined by the *Reason* of it.

But to return. The Poet having proved that the *ruling Passion* (since Nature hath given it us) is not to be overthrown, but *rectified*, the next Inquiry will be of what Use the *ruling Passion* is; for an *Use* it must have, if Reason be to treat it thus mildly? *This Use* he shews us [from l. 156 to 187] is twofold, *Natural* and *Moral*.

1. It's *natural Use* is to conduct Men steddily to *one certain End*, who would otherwise be eternally fluctuating between the *equal Violence* of various

<sup>f</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 174.

and

and discordant Passions, driving them up and down at random :

Like varying Winds, by *other* Passions toft,  
 This drives them constant to a certain Coast;  
 and by that Means enables them to promote the  
*Good of Society* by making each a Contributor to  
 the common Stock.

Let *Pow'r* or *Knowledge*, *Gold* or *Glory* please,  
 Or (oft more strong than all) the *Love of Ease* :  
*Thro'* Life 'tis follow'd.—

2. Its *moral Use* is to ingraft our *ruling Virtue* up-  
 on it :

Th' eternal Art, educing Good from Ill,  
 Grafts on this Passion our *best Principle*;  
 and by that Means enables us to promote *our*  
*own Good* by turning the Exorbitancy of the *ruling*  
*Passion* into its *neighbouring Virtue* :

See *Anger*, *Zeal* and *Fortitude* supply;  
 Ev'n *Avarice*, *Prudence*; *Sloth*, *Philosophy* :  
 Nor *Virtue*, male or female, can we name,  
 But what will grow on *Pride*, or grow on *Shame*.

The Wisdom of the divine Artist is, as the Poet  
 finely observes, very illustrious in this Contrivance :  
 For the Mind and Body having now one common  
 Interest, the Efforts of *Virtue* will have their Force  
 infinitely augmented :

'Tis thus the Mercury of Man is fixt,  
 Strong grows the *Virtue* with his Nature mixt ;

The

The Dross cements what else were too refin'd,  
And in one Int'rest Body acts with Mind.

But lest it should be objected that this Account favours the Doctrine of *Necessity*, and would insinuate that Men are *only acted upon* in the Production of Good out of Evil; the Poet teacheth [from l. 186 to 193] that Man is a *free Agent*, and hath it in his *own Power* to turn the natural Passions into *Virtues* or into *Vices*, properly so called :

*Reason* the Bias turns from Good to Ill,  
And *Nero* reigns a *Titus*, if he WILL.

*Secondly*, If it should be objected, that tho' the Poet doth indeed tell us some Actions are *beneficial* and some *hurtful*, yet he could not call those *Virtuous*, nor these *Vicious*, because, as he has described Things, the *Motive* appears to be only *Gratification of some Passion*; give me leave to answer for him, that this would be mistaking the Argument, which in this Epistle [to l. 239.] considers the Passions *only with regard to Society*, that is, with regard to their *Effects* rather than their *Motives*.—That however 'tis his Design to teach that Actions are *properly virtuous and vicious*; and tho' it be difficult to distinguish *genuine* Virtue from *spurious*, they having both the same *Appearance*, and both the same *public Effects*, yet they may be disembarassed. If it be asked, by what Means? He replies [from l. 192 to 195] by *Conscience*, which is sufficient to the Purpose; for

'tis



'tis only a Man's *own* Concern, to know whether his Virtue be pure and solid; for what is that to *others*, while the Effect of this Virtue, whether real or unsubstantial, is, as to *them*, the same?

This Light and Darknesh, in our Chaos join'd,  
What shall divide? *The God within the Mind.*

A *Platonic Phrase* for CONSCIENCE; and here employed with great Judgment and Propriety. For *Conscience* either signifies, *speculatively*, the Judgment we pass of Things upon whatever Principles we chance to have; and then it is only OPINION, a very unable Judge and *Divider*: Or else, it signifies, *practically*, the Application of the *eternal Rule of Right* (received by us as the *Law of God*) to the Regulation of our Actions; and then it is properly CONSCIENCE, *The God* (or the Law of God) *within the Mind*, of Power to divide the Light from the Darknesh in this Chaos of the Passions.

But still it will be said, why all this Difficulty to distinguish true Virtue from false? The Poet shews *why* [from l. 194 to 201] “That tho’ indeed  
“Vice and Virtue so invade each other’s Bounds,  
“that sometimes we can scarce tell where one  
“ends and the other begins, yet great Purposes  
“are serv’d thereby, no less than the perfecting  
“the Constitution of the Whole; as Lights and  
“Shades, which run into one another in a well-  
“wrought Picture, make the Harmony and Spi-  
“rit of the Composition.” But on this Account  
to

say there is neither *Vice* nor *Virtue*, the Poet shews [from l. 200 to 207] would be just as wise as to say there is neither *black* nor *white*; because the Shade of *that*, and the Light of *this* often run into one another:

Ask your *own Heart*, and nothing is so plain;  
 'Tis to mistake them costs the Time and Pain.

This is an Error of *Speculation* which leads Men so foolishly to conclude, that there is neither *Vice* nor *Virtue*.

2. There is another of *Practice*, which hath more common and fatal Effects; and is next considered [from l. 206 to 211:] It is this, That tho', at the first Aspect, *Vice* be so horrible as to affright all Beholders, yet, when by Habit we are once grown familiar with her, we first suffer, and in time begin to lose the Memory of her Nature:

Vice is a Monster of so frightful Mien,  
 As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;  
 Yet seen too oft, familiar with her Face,  
 We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

Which necessarily implies an equal Ignorance in the Nature of *Virtue*. Hence Men conclude, that there is neither one nor the other.

But it is not only that *Extreme of Vice next to Virtue*, which betrays us into these Mistakes: We are deceived too, as he shews us [from l. 210 to 221] by our Observations about the *other Extreme*:

But

But where th'Extreme of Vice was ne'er agreed :  
Ask where's the North ? at *York* 'tis on the *Tweed*,  
In *Scotland*, at the *Orcades* ; and there  
At *Greenland*, *Zembla*, or the Lord knows where.

For, from the *Extreme* of Vice's being unsettled,  
and perpetually shifting, Men conclude, that *Vice*  
*itself* is only nominal.

3. There is yet a *third* Cause of this Error of *no*  
*Vice no Virtue*, composed of the other two, *i. e.*  
partly *speculative*, and partly *practical* : And this  
also the Poet considers [from l. 220 to 229] shew-  
ing it ariseth from the *Imperfection* of the *best*  
Characters, and the *Inequality* of *all* ; whence it  
happens that no Man is extremely virtuous or  
vicious, nor extremely constant in the Pursuit of  
either. Why it so happens the Poet assigns an  
admirable Reason in this Line :

For, Vice or Virtue, *SELF directs it still*.

An Adherence or Regard to what is, in the  
Sense of the World, a *Man's own Interest*, mak-  
ing an Extreme in either impossible. Its Effect  
in keeping a good Man from the *Extreme of Vir-*  
*tue* needs no Explanation : And in an ill Man,  
*Self-interest* shewing him the Necessity of some  
kind of Reputation, the procuring and preserving  
*that* will necessarily keep him from the *Extreme*  
*of Vice*.

The Mention of this Principle that *self directs*  
*Vice and Virtue*, and its Consequence, which is,  
that

H

Each

Each Individual seeks a several Goal,  
leads the Author to observe

That Heav'n's great View is one, and that the  
Whole;

and this brings him naturally round again to his  
main Subject, namely, *God's producing Good out  
of Ill*, which he prosecutes in his inimitable Man-  
ner [from l. 228 to 239.]

That counterworks each Folly and Caprice;  
That disappoints th'Effect of ev'ry Vice:  
That happy Frailties to all Ranks apply'd,  
Shame to the Virgin, to the Matron Pride,  
Fear to the Statesman, Rashness to the Chief,  
To Kings Presumption, and to Crowds Belief.

I. *Hitherto* the Poet hath been employed in dis-  
couraging of the *Use of the Passions*, with regard  
to Society at large, and in freeing his Doctrine  
from *Objections*. This is the *first* general Division  
of the Subject of *this Epistle*.

II. He comes to shew [from l. 238 to 251] the  
Use of these Passions, *with regard to the more  
confined Circle of our Friends, Relations and Ac-  
quaintance*. And this is the *Second* general Di-  
vision :

*Wants, Frailties, Passions* closer still ally  
The common Int'rest, or endear the Tie :  
To *these* we owe true Friendship, Love sincere,  
Each home-felt Joy that *Life* inherits here :  
Yet from *the same* we learn in *its* Decline  
Those Joys, those Loves, those Int'rests to resign.  
As

As these Lines seem not to have been understood by the *Translator*, and are scandalously misrepresented by the *Commentator*, who would insinuate them to be a kind of Approbation of *Suicide*<sup>h</sup>, I shall here give the Reader their plain and obvious Meaning.

“ To these Frailties (says he) we owe all the  
 “ Endearments of private Life, yet, when we  
 “ come to that Age, which generally disposes  
 “ Men to think more seriously of the true Value  
 “ of Things, and consequently, of their Provi-  
 “ sion for a future State, the Consideration that  
 “ the *Grounds* of those *Joys, Loves and Friend-*  
 “ *ships*, are *Wants, Frailties and Passions*, proves  
 “ the best Expedient to wean us from the *World*;  
 “ a Disengagement so friendly to that Provision we  
 “ are now making for *another*.” The Observation is new, and would in any Place be extremely beautiful, but has *here* an infinite Grace and Propriety, as it so well confirms, by an Instance of great Moment, the Poet's general Thesis, *That God makes Ill, at every Step, productive of Good*.

III. The Poet having thus shewn the Use of the Passions in *Society* and in *domestic Life*, he comes in *the last Place* [from l. 250 to the End] to shew their Use to *the Individual*, even in their *Illusions*; the imaginary Happiness they present helping to make the real Miseries of Life less insupportable. And this is his *third* general Division:

<sup>h</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 206.

— *Opinion* gilds with varying Rays

Those painted Clouds that beautify our Days:  
Each Want of Happiness by Hope supply'd,  
And each Vacuity of Sense by Pride.

These build as fast as Knowledge can destroy:  
In Folly's Cup still laughs the Bubble Joy;  
One Prospect lost, another still we gain;  
And not a Vanity is given in vain.

Which must needs vastly raise our Idea of God's Goodness, who hath not only provided more than a Counter-balance of *real* Happiness to human Miseries, but hath even, in his infinite Compassion, bestowed on those who were so foolish as not to have made this Provision, an *imaginary* Happiness; that they may not be *quite* over-borne with the Load of human Miseries. This is the Poet's great and noble Thought, as strong and solid as it is new and ingenious. But so strangely perverse is his *Commentator*, that he will suppose him to mean any thing rather than what the obvious Drift of his Argument requires; yet, to say Truth, cares not much in what Sense you take it, so you will believe him that Mr. *Pope's* general Design was to represent human Life as *one grand Illusion fatally conducted*. But if the Rules of *Logic* serve for any other Purpose than to countenance the Passions and Prejudices of such Writers, it may be demonstrated, that what the Poet here teaches is only this, " That these Illusions are the Follies of Men, " which they *wilfully* fall into, and thro' their  
" own

“ own *Fault*; thereby depriving themselves of  
“ much Happiness, and exposing themselves to  
“ equal Misery: But that still God (according  
“ to his Universal way of Working) graciously  
“ turns these Follies so far to the Advantage of his  
“ miserable Creatures, as to be the *present* Solace  
“ and Support of their Distresses,”

— Tho' Man's a Fool, yet God is wise.

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## LETTER III.

**W**E are now got to the *Third Epistle* of the *Essay on Man*. Mr. Pope, in explaining the Origin, Use, and End of the Passions, in the *second Epistle*, having shewn that Man has *social* as well as *selfish* Passions; that Doctrine naturally introduceth the *Third*, which treats of Man as a **SOCIAL** Animal; and connects it with the *Second*, which considered him as an **INDIVIDUAL**. And as the Conclusion from the Subject of the *First Epistle* made the Introduction to the *Second*, so here again, the Conclusion of the *Second*,

Even mean Self-love becomes, by Force divine,  
The Scale to measure others Wants by thine,  
makes the Introduction to the *Third*:

Here then we rest; the Universal Cause  
Acts to *one* End, but acts by *various* Laws.

The Reason of *Variety* in those Laws, all which tend to *one* and the same End, the Good of the *Whole*, generally, is, because the Good of the *Individual* is likewise to be provided for; both which together, make up the Good of the Whole

univer-



*universally*. And this is the Cause, as the Poet says elsewhere, that

Each Individual seeks a *several* Goal.

Ep. ii. l. 227.

But to prevent their resting *there*, God has made each need the Assistance of another; and so,

On mutual Wants, built mutual Happiness.

Ep. iii. l. 112.

It was necessary to explain these two first Lines, the better to see the Pertinency and Force of what follows [from l. 2 to 7] where the Poet warns such to take Notice of this Truth, whose Circumstances placing them in an *imaginary* Station of Independence, and a *real* one of Insensibility to mutual Wants (from whence general Happiness results) make them but too apt to overlook the true System of Things; such as those in *full Health* and *Opulence*. This Caution was necessary with regard to *Society*; but still more necessary with regard to *Religion*: Therefore he especially recommends the Memory of it both to Clergy and Laity, when they *preach* or *pray*; because the *Preacher* who does not consider the *First Cause* under this View, as a Being consulting the Good of the Whole, must needs give a very *unworthy* Idea of him: And the Suppliant, who prays as one not related to a *Whole*, or as disregarding the Happiness of it, will not only pray in *vain*, but *offend* his Maker, by an impious Attempt to counterwork his Dispensation:

H 4

In

In all the Madneſs of ſuperfluous *Health*,  
 The Trim of *Pride*, the Impudence of *Wealth*,  
 Let this great Truth be preſent Night and Day,  
 But moſt be preſent, if we *preach* or *pray*.

The Tranſlator not ſeeing into the admirable Purpoſes of this Caution, hath quite dropt the moſt material Circumſtances contained in the *laſt* Line; and, what is worſe, for the ſake of a fooliſh Antitheſis, hath deſtroyed the whole Propriety of the Thought, in the *firſt* and *ſecond*, and ſo, between both, hath left his Author neither Senſe nor Syſtem,

Dans le Sein du bonheur, ou de l'*Adverſité*.

Now, of all Men, thoſe in *Adverſity* have the leaſt need of this Caution, as being the leaſt apt to forget *that God conſults the Good of the Whole, and provides for it, by procuring mutual Happineſs by means of mutual Wants*: Becauſe ſuch as yet retain the Smart of any freſh Calamity are moſt compaſſionate to others labouring under the ſame Miſfortunes, and moſt prompt and ready to relieve them.

The Poet then introduceth his Syſtem of human *Sociability* [l. 7, 8] by ſhewing it to be the Dictate of the Creator, and that *Man*, in *this*, did but follow the Example of *general Nature*, which is united in *one cloſe Syſtem of Benevolence*:

Look round our World; behold the Chain of Love  
 Combining all below, and all above.

This he proves, *firſt* [from l. 8 to 13] (on the noble

noble Theory of *Attraction*) from the Oeconomy of the *material World*; where there is a general Conspiracy in all the Particles of Matter to work for one End; the Use, Beauty and Harmony of the whole Mass.

I.

See plastic Nature working to this End,  
The single Atoms each to other tend,  
Attract, attracted to, the next in Place  
*Form'd* and *impell'd* it's Neighbour to embrace.

*Formed and impelled*, says he. These are not Words of a loose undistinguished Meaning, thrown in to fill up the Verse. This is not our Author's Way, they are full of Sense; and of the most philosophical Precision. For to make Matter so *cohere* as to fit it for the Uses intended by its Creator, a proper Configuration of its insensible Parts is as necessary as that Quality so equally and universally conferred upon it, called *Attraction*.

But here again the Translator mistaking this Description of the *Preservation* of the material Universe by the Principle of Attraction, for a Description of its *Creation*, has quite destroyed the Poet's fine analogical Argument, by which he proves, from the Circumstance of mutual Attraction in Matter, that Man, while he seeks Society, and thereby promotes the Good of his Species, co-operates with God's *general Dispensation*. For the Circumstance of a *Creation* proves nothing but a *Creator*:

Voi

Voi du *Sein du Chaos* eclater la lumiere,

Chaque Atome ebranlé courir pour s'embrasser, &c.

The Poet's *second* Argument [from l. 12 to 27] is taken from the *vegetable* and *animal World*; whose Beings serve *mutually* for the Production, Support, and Sustainment of each other.

## II.

See Matter next, with various Life endu'd,

Press to one Centre still, *the gen'ral Good*;

See dying Vegetables Life sustain,

See Life dissolving vegetate again:

All Forms that perish other Forms supply,

By Turns they catch the vital Breath, and die;

Like Bubbles to the Sea of Matter born,

They rise, they break, and to that Sea return, &c.

One would wonder what should have induced Mr. *P Abbé* to translate the two last Lines, thus:

*Sart du neant y rentre, et reparoit au jour.*

*Comes out of Nothing, and enters back again into Nothing.*

But he is generally as consistently wrong as his Author is right. For having, as we observed, mistaken the Poet's Account of the *Preservation* of the *material* World, for the *Creation* of it; he makes the very same Mistake with regard to the *vegetable* and *animal*; and so comes in here (indeed rather of the latest) with his *Production of Things out of nothing*.

I should not have taken notice of this Mistake but for Mr. *De Crousaz's* ready Remark. "Mr. Pope,

“ *Pope*, says he, descends even to the most vulgar Prejudices; when he tells us, that *each Being comes out of Nothing*, the common People think that that which disappears is annihilated. “ The Atoms, the smallest Particles, the Roots of terrestrial Bodies subsist, &c. ” But who it is that descends to the worst *vulgar Prejudices*, the Reader will see when he is told that Mr. *De Crousaz* knew very well that Mr. *Pope* said not one Word of each Being’s *going back into Nothing*; both from his not finding it in the Prose Translator, and from *Resnel’s* Confession in his Preface, that he had taken great Liberties with his Original.

But this Part of the Argument, in which the Poet tells us, that God

Connects each Being, greatest with the least;  
Made Beast in Aid of Man, and Man of Beast;  
*All serv’d, all serving —*

awaking again the old *Pride* of his Adversaries, who cannot bear that Man should be thought to be *serving* as well as *served*; he takes this Occasion again to *humble* them [from l. 26 to 53] by the same kind of Argument he had so successfully employed in the *first* Epistle, and which our *first* Letter has considered at large.

However, his Adversaries, loth to give up the Question, will reason upon the Matter; and we are now to suppose them objecting against Provi-

\* *Commentaire*, p. 221.

dence

dence in this Manner.—We grant, say they, that in the *irrational*, as in the *inanimate* Creation, *all is served, and all is serving*. But, with regard to Man, the Case is different; he stands single. For his *Reason* hath endowed him both with Power and Address sufficient to make all Things *serve him*; and his *Self-love*, of which you have so largely provided for him, will dispose him, in his Turn, *to serve none*. Therefore your Theory is imperfect.—“Not so, replies the Poet [from l. “52 to 83] I grant you, Man indeed affects to “be the *Wit and Tyrant of the Whole*, and would “fain shake off

—That Chain of Love,  
Combining all below and all above:

“But Nature, even by the *very Gift of Reason*,  
“checks this *Tyrant*: For *Reason* endowing Man  
“with the Ability of setting together the *Memory*  
“of the past, and *Conjecture* about the Future; and  
“past Misfortunes making him apprehensive of  
“more to come, this ‘disposes him to pity and  
“relieve others in a *State of Suffering*. And the  
“Passion growing habitual, naturally extends its  
“Effects to all that have a *Sense* of suffering.  
“Now as Brutes have neither Man’s *Reason*, nor  
“his inordinate *Self-love* to draw them from the  
“System of Benevolence, so they wanted not,  
“and therefore have not, this *human Sympathy* of  
“another’s Misery. By which Passion we see  
“those Qualities, in Man, ballance one another,  
“and

“ and so retain him in that general *Order*, in  
 “ which Providence has placed its whole Crea-  
 “ tion. But this is not all; Man's Interest, Amuse-  
 “ ment, Vanity, and Luxury, tie him still closer  
 “ to the System of Benevolence, by obliging him  
 “ to provide for the Support of other Animals;  
 “ and tho' it be, for the most part, only to de-  
 “ vour them with the greater Gust, yet this does  
 “ not abate the proper Happiness of the Animals  
 “ so preserved, to whom *Providence has not given*  
 “ *the useless Knowledge of their End*. From all  
 “ which it appears, that the Theory is yet uni-  
 “ form, and perfect.

Grant that the Pow'rful still the Weak controul,  
 Be Man the Wit and Tyrant of the Whole:  
 Nature that Tyrant checks; he only knows  
 And helps another Creature's Wants and Woes.  
 Say, will the Falcon, stooping from above,  
 Smit with her varying Plumage, spare the Dove?  
 Admires the Jay the Insect's gilded Wings,  
 Or hears the Hawk when *Philomela* sings?  
 Man cares for all, &c. —

For some his Int'rest prompts him to provide,  
 For more his Pleasure, yet for more his Pride.

This is the Force of this fine and noble Argument.  
 The senseless and scandalous Reflections of Mr.  
*De Croufaz* on the latter Part of it, I have re-  
 futed in my former Letter.

But even to this, as a *Caviller* would still object,  
 we must suppose him so to do, and say,—Admit  
 you

you have shewn that Nature hath endowed all Animals, whether human or brutal, with such Faculties as admirably fit them to promote the *general Good*: Yet, in its Care for *this*, hath not Nature neglected to provide for the *private Good* of the Individual? We have Cause to think it hath, and we suppose that it was on this exclusive Consideration that it kept back from Brutes the Gift of *Reason* (so necessary a Means of *private Happiness*) because *Reason*, as we find in the Instance of Man, where there is Occasion for all the complicated Contrivance you have described above, to make the Effects of his *Passions* counterwork the immediate Powers of his *Reason*, in order to keep him subservient to the *general System*; *Reason*, we say, naturally tends to draw Beings into a *private*, independent System.

This the Poet answers by shewing [from l. 82 to 109] that the *Happiness* of *animal* and *human* Life is widely different. The Happiness of human Life consisting in the Improvement of the Mind, can be procured by *Reason* only: But the Happiness of animal Life consisting in the Gratifications of Sense, is best promoted by *Instinct*. And, with regard to the regular and constant Operation of each, in *that*, Instinct hath plainly the Advantage: For *here* God directs *immediately*; *there*, only *mediately*, thro' Man:

Reason, however able, cool at best,  
Cares not for Service, or but serves when prest;

Stays



Stays 'till we call, and then not often near;  
But honest Instinct comes a Volunteer.  
And Reason raise o'er Instinct as you can,  
In this 'tis *God directs*, in that 'tis *Man*.

The Commentator (who I will, in Charity, suppose saw nothing of this fine and sober Reasoning, nor was apprehensive of the *Objection* which occasioned it, tho' that Objection arises directly from the Subject) accuseth the Poet of designing to *represent Brutes as perfect as Man, who is* (says he) *of a Nature susceptible of Religion*<sup>b</sup>. But if our Commentator could not see the Chain of Reasoning, he might yet, methinks, have attended to this plain Denunciation of the Poet, which introduceth the Discourse that gives him so much Offence:

Whether with Reason or with Instinct blest,  
*Know* all enjoy the Power, *which suits them best*:  
To Bliss alike by that Direction tend,  
*And find the Means proportion'd to the End*.

Which shews the *Perfection* here spoken of not to be a Perfection *equalled* to that of another Being, but only such an one as is *proportioned* to the Being itself, of whom this Perfection is predicated.

The Poet now comes to the *main* Subject of his Epistle, the Proof of Man's SOCIABILITY, from the two general Societies composed by him; the NATURAL, subject to *paternal* Authority;

<sup>b</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 229.

and

and the CIVIL, subject to that of a Magistrate: Which he hath had the Address to introduce, from what had preceded, in so easy and natural a Manner, as shews him to have the Art of giving all the Grace to the Dryness and Severity of Method, as well as Wit to the Strength and Depth of Reason. For the philosophic Nature of his Work requiring he should shew by what Means those Societies were introduced, this affords him an Opportunity of sliding gracefully and easily from the *Preliminaries* into the *main Subject*; and so of giving his Work that Perfection of Method, which we find only in the Compositions of great Writers.

For having just before, tho' to a different Purpose, described the Power of bestial Instinct to attain the Happiness of the *Individual*, he goes on in speaking of Instinct as it is serviceable both to *that*, and to the *Kind* [from l. 108 to 148] to illustrate the Original of Society. He shews, that tho', as he had before observed, God had founded the proper Bliss of each Creature in the *Nature* of its own *Being*, yet these not being independent Individuals, but Parts of a Whole, God, to bless that Whole, built mutual Happiness on mutual Wants: Now for the Supply of mutual Wants, Creatures must necessarily come together; which is the first Ground of Society amongst Men:

Whate'er of Life all-quick'ning Æther keeps,  
Or breaths thro' Air, or shoots beneath the Deeps,  
Or

Or pours profuse on Earth; one Nature feeds  
The vital Flame, and swells the genial Seeds.  
Not Man alone, but all that roam the Wood,  
Or wing the Sky, or roll along the Flood,  
Each loves itself, but not itself alone,  
Each Sex desires alike, 'till two are one.

He then proceeds to that called *natural*, subject to *paternal* Authority, and arising from the Union of the two Sexes; describes the imperfect Image of it in Brutes; then explains it at large in all its Causes and Effects: And, lastly, shews, that as IN FACT, like mere *animal* Society, it is founded and preserved by mutual Wants, the Supplial of which causes mutual Happiness; so is it likewise in RIGHT, as a *rational* Society, by Equity, Gratitude, and the Observance of the Relation of Things in general:

Reflection, Reason, still the Ties improve;  
At once extend the Int'rest, and the Love:  
With Choice we fix, with Sympathy we burn,  
Each Virtue in each Passion takes its Turn;  
And still new Needs, new Helps, new Habits rise,  
That graft Benevolence on Charities.  
Mem'ry and Forecast just Returns engage,  
That pointed back to Youth, this on to Age;  
While Pleasure, Gratitude, and Hope combin'd,  
Still spread the Int'rest, and preserv'd the Kind.

But the Atheist and *Hobbist*, against whom Mr. Pope writes, deny the Principle of *Right*, or of *natural Justice*, before the Invention of *civil Com-*

I

*pass,*

*pass*, which, they say, gave Being to it: And accordingly have had the Effrontery publickly to declare *that a State of Nature was a State of War*. This quite subverts the Poet's *natural Society*: Therefore, after his *Account* of *that State*, he proceeds to support the *Reality* of it, by overthrowing the oppugnant Principle of *no natural Justice*; which he does [from l. 147 to 170] by shewing, in a fine Description of *the State of Innocence*, as represented in Scripture, that a State of Nature was so far from being without *natural Justice*, that it was, at first, the *Reign of God*, where *Right and Truth* universally prevail'd:

Nor think, in Nature's State they blindly trod,  
 The State of Nature was the Reign of God.  
 Self-love, and social, at her Birth began,  
 Union, the Bond of all Things, and of Man.  
 Pride then was not; nor *Arts*, that Pride to aid;  
 Man walk'd with Beast, joint Tenant of the Shade.

Now let us hear Mr. *De Crousaz*, who tells us, *he had redoubled his Attention upon this Epistle*<sup>c</sup>.—Mr. *Pope* (says he) *speaks with the Assurance of an Eye-witness of what passed in this first Age of the World*<sup>d</sup>.—And why should he not, when conducted by his Faith in Scripture History?—*That which he here represents*, says he, *is much less credible in itself, than that which Moses teacheth us*<sup>d</sup>. Now what must we think of our Logician's Faith,

<sup>c</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 218.

<sup>d</sup> *Ib.* 240.

who

who taking it for granted, that Mr. *Pope* would not borrow of *Moses*, has here condemn'd, before he was aware, the Credibility of Scripture History? For the Account here given of the *State of Innocence* is indeed no other than that of *Moses* himself.

He goes on, — *This Religion, common to Brutes and Men, insinuates to us, that, in those happy Times, Men had no more Religion than Brutes*°.

This shrewd Reflection points at the following Lines :

In the same Temple, the resounding Wood,  
All vocal Beings hymn'd their equal God.

But does not the Poet speak, in this very place, of Man, as officiating in the priestly Office at the Altar, and offering up his blameless eucharistical Sacrifice to Heaven?

The Shrine with Gore unstain'd, with Gold undrest,  
Unbrib'd, unbloody, stood the blameless Priest.  
As to the Line,

All vocal Beings hymn'd their equal God,  
our Logician should be sent to Scripture for its Meaning; who, had he been as conversant with the *Psalmist* as with *Burgersdicius*, would have learned to have judg'd more piously as well as more charitably. The *inspired* Poet calling to Mind (as Mr. *Pope* did here) the *Age of Innocence*,

° *Commentaire*, p. 240.

and full of the great Ideas of those

— Chains of Love,  
Combining all below, and all above;

which

Draw to one Point, and to one Centre bring  
*Beast, Man, or Angel, Servant, Lord, or King*;  
breaks out into this rapturous and divine Apostrophe, to call back the devious Creation to its pristine Rectitude. That very State Mr. *Pope* describes above:—"Praise the Lord, all ye *Angels*;  
"praise him, all ye Hosts. Praise him, Sun and  
"Moon; praise him, all ye Stars of Light. Let  
"them praise the Name of the Lord, for he com-  
"manded, and they were created. Praise the Lord  
"from the Earth, ye Dragons, and all Deep: Fire  
"and Hail, Snow and Vapour, stormy Wind ful-  
"filling his Word: Mountains and all Hills, fruit-  
"ful Trees, and all Cedars: *Beasts* and all Cattle,  
"creeping Things, and *flying Fowl*: *Kings* of the  
"Earth, and all *People*; *Princes* and all *Judges of*  
"the Earth. Let them praise the Name of the  
"Lord; for his Name alone is excellent, his Glo-  
"ry is above the Earth and Heaven." *Psal.*  
cxlviii.

To return. Strict Method (in which, by this time, the Reader finds the Poet more conversant than our Logician was aware of) leads him next to speak of that Society which succeeded the *natural*, namely the *civil*. But as he does all by easy Steps, in the natural Progression of Ideas, he first ex-  
plains

plains [from l. 169 to 200] the *intermediate Means* which led Mankind from *natural* to *civil* Society. These were the *Invention* and *Improvement of Arts*. For while Mankind lived in a mere State of Nature, unconscious of the Arts of Life, there was no need of any other Government than the *paternal*; but when Arts were found out and improved, then that more perfect Form under the Direction of a *Magistrate*, became necessary. And for these Reasons; *First*, to bring those Arts, already found, to *Perfection*; and, *Secondly*, to secure the Product of them to their rightful *Proprietors*. The Poet, therefore, comes now, as we say, to the *Invention of Arts*; but being always intent on the great End for which he wrote his *Essay*, namely, to mortify that *Pride*, which occasions the impious Complaints against Providence, he, with the greatest Art and Contrivance,<sup>s</sup> speaks of these *Inventions*, as only Lessons learnt of mere Animals guided by Instinct; and thus, at the same time, gives a new Instance of the wonderful Providence of God, who has contrived to teach Mankind in a Way not only proper to humble human Arrogance, but to raise our Idea of infinite Wisdom to the greatest Pitch. All this he does in a *Prosopopœia* the most sublime that ever entered into the human Imagination :

See him from *Nature* rising flow to *Art* !  
 To copy *Instinct* then was *Reason's* Part :  
 Thus then to Man the Voice of Nature spake—  
 “ Go, from the Creatures thy Instructions take ;  
   I 3   Thy

" Thy Arts of Building from the *Bee* receive,  
 " Learn of the *Mole* to plow, the *Worm* to weave;  
 " Learn of the little *Nautilus* to sail,  
 " Spread the thin Oar, and catch the driving  
 " Gale, &c.  
 " Yet go! and thus o'er all the Creatures sway,  
 " Thus let the Wiser make the rest obey,  
 " And for those Arts mere *Instinct* could afford,  
 " Be crown'd as *Monarchs*, or as *Gods* ador'd.

The Delicacy of the Poet's Address in the first Part of the last Line, is very remarkable. I observed, that, in this Paragraph, he has given an Account of those *intermediate Means* that led Mankind from *natural* to *civil* Society, namely, the Invention and Improvement of Arts. Now here, on his Conclusion of this Account, and Entry upon the Description of *civil Society* itself, he connects the two Parts the most gracefully that can be conceived, by this true historical Circumstance, that it was the *Invention* of those Arts, which raised to the Magistracy, in this *new Society*, now formed for the *perfecting* them.

I cannot leave this Part without taking notice of the strange Turn the Translator has given to these two Lines:

Thus then to Man the Voice of Nature spake,—  
 " Go, from the Creatures thy Instructions take.

La Nature *indigné* alors se fit entendre;  
 Va, malheureux mortel, va, lui dit elle, apprendre  
 Des *plus vils* animaux.—

One



One would wonder what should make him represent *Nature* in such a Passion at Man, and calling him Names, when Mr. *Pope* supposes her in her best good Humour, and Man the most *happy* in the Direction here given. But what led him into this Mistake was another full as gross: Mr. *Pope* having described the State of Innocence, which ends at these Lines,

Heav'n's Attribute was universal Care,  
And Man's Prerogative to rule, but spare,  
turns from *those* Times, to a View of *these latter Ages*, and breaks out into this tender and humane Complaint:

Ah, how unlike *the Man of Times to come!*  
Of half that live the Butcher and the Tomb;  
Who, Foe to Nature, hears the general Groan,  
Murders their Species, and betrays his own, &c.

Unluckily, the Translator took this *Man of Times to come*, for the Corrupter of that *first Age*; and so imagined the Poet had introduced *Nature* only to set things right; he then supposed, of course, she was to be very angry, and not finding Mr. *Pope* had represented her in any great Emotion, he was willing to improve upon his Original.

To proceed, after all this necessary Preparation, the Poet shews [from l. 199 to 211.] how *Civil Society* followed, and the Advantages it produced. But these are best described in his own Words:

Great Nature spoke; observant Men obey'd;  
Cities were built, Societies were made:

I 4

Here

Here rose one little State; another near  
 Grew by like Means, and join'd thro' Love, or Fear.  
 Did here the Trees with ruddier Burthens bend,  
 And there the Streams in purer Rills descend?  
 What War could ravish, Commerce could bestow,  
 And he return'd a Friend, who came a Foe.  
 Converse and Love Mankind might strongly draw,  
 When Love was Liberty, and Nature Law.  
 Thus States were form'd. —

Nothing can be juster than this Account, or more corroborative of the Poet's general Theory. Yet his Translator has a strange Fatality in contradicting him, whenever he attempts to *paraphrase his Sense*.

The first Line Mr. l'Abbé turns thus,

Par ces mots la Nature excita l'Industrie,  
 Et de l'Homme feroce enchaina la furie,  
*Chained up the Fury of Savage Man,*

And so contradicts his Author's whole System of *Benevolence*, and goes over to the Atheist's, who supposes the *State of Nature* to be a *State of War*. That which seems to have misled him was these Lines:

What War could ravish, Commerce could bestow,  
 And he return'd a Friend, who came a Foe.

But the Translator should have considered, that tho' his Author maintains *a State of Nature to be a State of Peace*, yet he never imagined there could be *no Quarrels* in it. He well knew, that *Self-love drives thro' Just and thro' Unjust* \*. He pushes no System

\* Ep. iii. l. 270.

to an Extravagance; but steers between Doctrines seemingly opposite<sup>h</sup>, or, in other Words, follows Truth uniformly throughout.

Having thus explained the Original of *Civil Society*, he shews us next [from l. 210 to 216] that to this Society a *civil Magistrate*, properly so called, did belong: And this, in Confutation of that idle Hypothesis of *Filmer*, and others; which pretends that God conferred the *regal Title* on the *Fathers of Families*, from whence Men, when they had instituted Society, were to fetch their *Magistrates*. On the contrary, our Poet shews that a *King* was unknown till *common Interest*, which led Men to institute civil Government, led them, at the same time, to institute a *Governor*. However, that it is true that the same *Wisdom* or *Valor*, which gained *regal Obedience* from Sons to the *Sire*, procured *Kings* a *paternal Authority*, and made them considered as *Fathers of their People*. Which probably was the *Original* (and, while mistaken, continues to be the chief *Support*) of that slavish Error; Antiquity representing its earliest Monarchs under the Idea of a *common Father*, πατήρ ἀνδρῶν. Afterwards indeed they became a kind of *Foster-Fathers*, ποιμένα λαῶν, as *Homer* calls them: Till at length they began to devour that Flock they had been so long accustomed to shear; and, as *Plutarch* says of *Cecrops*, ἐν χρηστῇ βασιλείᾳ ἀγέλον καὶ δεσποιντῶν γενομένων ΤΥΡΑΝΝΟΝ.

<sup>h</sup> See Preface.

— the Name of King unknown,

'Till common Int'rest plac'd the Sway in one.

'Twas Virtue only (or in Arts, or Arms,  
Diffusing Blessings, or averting Harms)

The same which in a Sire the Sons obey'd,

A Prince, the Father of a People made.

Our Author has good Authority for his Account of the Origin of Kingship. *Aristotle* assures us of this Truth, that 'Twas *Virtue only or in Arts or Arms*. Καθίσταται Βασιλεύς ἐκ τῶν ἐπιεικῶν καθ' ὑπεροχὴν ἀρετῆς ἢ προξέων τῶν ὑπὸ τῆς ἀρετῆς, ἢ καθ' ὑπεροχὴν τοιούτου γένους<sup>1</sup>.

The Poet now returns [at l. 216 to 242] to what he had left unfinished in his Description of *natural Society*. This, which appears irregular, is indeed a fine Instance of his thorough Knowledge of the Art of Method. I will explain it.

This third Epistle, we see, considers *Man with respect to Society*; the second, *with respect to himself*; and the fourth, *with respect to Happiness*. But in none of these Relations does the Poet ever lose sight of him under *that* in which he stands to God; it will follow therefore, that speaking of him *with respect to SOCIETY*, the Account would be then most imperfect, were he not at the same time considered *with respect to his RELIGION*; for, between these two there is a close, and, while Things continue in *Order*, a most interesting Connection.

<sup>1</sup> *Polit. lib. v. c. 10.*

True

True Faith, true Policy, UNITED ran;  
That was but Love of God, and this of Man.

l. 240.

Now *Religion* suffering no *Change*, or *Depravation*, when Man first entered into civil Society, but continuing the same as in the State of Nature, the Poet, to avoid Repetition, and to bring the Accounts of *true* and *false* Religion nearer to one another, in order to *contrast* them by the Advantage of that Situation, deferred giving Account of his *Religion*, 'till he had spoken of the Origin of *that* Society. Thence it is, that he here resumes the Account of the *State of Nature*, that is, so much of it as he had left untouched, which was only the *Religion* of it. This consisting in the *Knowledge* of one God, the Creator of all Things, the Poet shews how Men came by that Knowledge. That it was either found out by REASON, which giving to every *Effect* a *Cause*, instructed them to go from *Cause* to *Cause*, till they came to the FIRST, who being *causeless*, would necessarily be judged *self-existent*: Or taught by TRADITION, which preserved the Memory of the Creation.— He then tells us *what* these Men, undebauched by false Science, understood by God's NATURE and ATTRIBUTES. 1st, Of God's *Nature*; that they easily distinguished between the *Workman* and the *Work*; and saw the *Substance* of the Creator to be distinct and different from *that* of the Creature; and so were in no Danger of falling into the horrid Opinion of the *Greek* Philosophers, and their Follower

Follower *Spinoza*. And simple Reason teaching them, that the Creator was but *One*, they easily saw that *all was right*; and were in as little Danger of falling into the *Manichean Error*, which, when *oblique Wit* had broke the *steddy Light* of Reason, imagined *all was not right*, having before imagined all was not the Work of *One*. 2dly, *What* they understood of God's *Attributes*; that they easily conceived a *Father* where they had found a *Deity*, and that a *sovereign Being* could only be a *sovereign Good*.

*Till then*, by Nature crown'd, each Patriarch sare,  
King, Priest, and Parent of his growing State:  
On him, their *second Providence*, they hung,  
Their Law his Eye; their Oracle his Tongue, &c.  
Till drooping, sick'ning, dying, they began  
Whom they rever'd as God, to mourn as Man.

## I.

Then, looking up from Sire to Sire, explor'd  
One great first Father, and that First ador'd.

## II.

Or plain Tradition that this all *begun*,  
Convey'd unbroken Faith from Sire to Son.

## I.

The Worker from the Work distinct was known,  
And simple Reason never sought but *one*.  
E're Wit oblique had broke that *steddy Light*,  
Man, like his Maker, saw that *all was right*.

## II.

II.

To Virtue in the Paths of Pleasure trod,  
And own'd a *Father* when he own'd a God.  
Love all the Faith, &c.

Our *methodical* Translator not apprehending that the Poet was here returned to finish his Description of the State of Nature, has fallen into one of the grossest Mistakes that ever was committed. He has taken this Account of *true Religion*, for an Account of the *Origin of Idolatry*, and thus fatally embellishes his own Blunder,

Jaloux d'en conserver les traits et la figure,  
Leur zele industrieux inventa la Peinture.  
Leurs neveux, attentifs à ces hommes fameux,  
Qui par le droit du sang avoient régné sur eux,  
Trouvent-ils dans leur suite un grand, un premier  
pere,  
Leur aveugle respect l'adore et le révere.

Here you have one of the finest Pieces of Reasoning in the World, turn'd, at once, into as mere a Heap of Nonsense. You will wonder how it came about: The unlucky Term of *Great first Father* confounded our Translator, and he took it to signify a *Great-Grandfather*. But he should have considered that Mr. Pope always represents God as every wise and good Man would do, and as our Religion directs us to do, under the Idea of a FATHER: He should have observed that the Poet is here describing those Men, who

To

To *Virtue* in the Paths of Pleasure trod,  
And own'd a *Father*, where they own'd a *God*.

You may be sure Mr. *De Croufaz* has not let these fine Strokes about the *Original of Painting* escape him. But here the Critic (which is a Wonder) proves clearer-sighted than the Translator; he saw that the Lines in Question were a Continuation of something *not immediately preceding*; but that was *all* he saw, as may appear by his sagacious Remark. "We shall be mistaken (says he) if we regard this Passage as a Continuation of the History immediately going before. It would be too great an Anachronism to suppose it. The Government of *Fathers of Families* did not succeed that of *Kings*; on the contrary, the Reign of *these* was established on the Government of *those* <sup>k</sup>."

Order leads the Poet to speak next [from l. 241 to 246] of the *Corruption of civil Society* into Tyranny, and its *Causes*; and here, with all the *Art of Address*, as well as *Truth*, he observes, it arose from the Violation of that *great Principle*, which he so much insists upon throughout his Essay, *That each was made for the Use of all*:

Who first taught Souls enslav'd, and Realms undone,

Th' enormous Faith of *many made for one*?

That proud Exception to all Nature's Laws,

T'invert the World, and counterwork its Cause.

<sup>k</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 249.

And



And in this *Aristotle* places the Difference between a King and a Tyrant; that the *first* supposes himself made for the People; the *other*, that the People are made for him<sup>1</sup>.

But we may be sure, that in this Corruption, where natural Justice was thrown aside, and *Force*, the Atheist's Justice, presided in its stead, *Religion* would follow the Fate of *civil Society*. We know, from ancient History, it did so. Accordingly, Mr. *Pope* [from l. 245 to 270] with corrupt Politics describes corrupt Religion and its Causes; he *first* informs us, agreeable to his exact Knowledge of Antiquity, that it was the POLITICIAN and not the PRIEST (as our illiterate Tribe of Free-thinkers would make us believe) who first corrupted Religion. *Secondly*, that the SUPERSTITION, he brought in, was not invented by him, as an *Engine* to play upon others (as the dreaming *Atheist* feigns, who would thus miserably account for the Origin of Religion) but was a *Trap* he first fell into himself.

Force first made Conquest, and that Conquest,  
Law;

Till *Superstition* taught the Tyrant awe,  
Then *shar'd* the Tyranny, then lent it aid,  
And Gods of Conqu'rors, Slaves of Subjects  
made.

<sup>1</sup> Βύλῃαι δ' ὁ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ εἶαι φύλαξ, ὅπως οἱ μὲν κεκτημένους τὰς ἐσίας, μὴδὲν ἄδικον πάσχωσιν, ὃ ὃ Δῆμος μὴ ἐξορίζῃται μὴδὲν, ἣ δὲ ΤΥΡΑΝΝΙΣ, πρὸς ἐδὲν ἀποδίδει καὶ τοῖς εἰ μὴ τῆς ἰδίας ὠφελείας χάριν. Pol. l. v. c. 10.

All

All this is agreeable to the Poet's vast Knowledge of human Nature. For that *Impotency* of Mind, as the *Latin* Writers call it <sup>m</sup>, which gives Birth to the enormous Crimes necessary to support a Tyranny, naturally subjects its Owner to all the *vain*, as well as *real* Terrors of Conscience. Hence the whole Machinery of *Superstition*.

She, 'midst the Lightning's Blaze and Thunder's Sound,

When rock'd the Mountains, and when groan'd the Ground,

She, from the rending Earth and bursting Skies, Saw Gods descend, and Fiends infernal rise.

And it is no Wonder that those, who had so impiously attempted to counterwork the Design of Nature, by acting as if *many were made for one*, should now imagine they saw all Nature arming in Vengeance against them.

It is true, the Poet observes, that afterwards, when the Tyrant's Fright was over, he had Cunning enough, from the Experience of the Effect of Superstition upon himself, to turn it by the Assistance of the Priest (who for his Reward went Shares with him in the Tyranny) as his best Defence against his Subjects.

<sup>m</sup> They expressed the *Passion for tyrannizing* by this Word. A fine *Roman* Historian says of *Marius*, that he was *Gloriæ insatiabilis*, IMPOTENS semperque inquietus. And of *Pompey*, *Potentiâ suâ nunquam aut raro ad IMPOTENTIAM usus*.

With

With Heav'n's own Thunders shook the World  
below,  
And play'd the God an Engine on his Foe.

For a Tyrant naturally and reasonably takes all his  
*Slaves* for his *Enémies*.

Having given the *Causes* of Superstition, he  
next describes its *Objects* :

Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,  
Whose Attributes were Rage, Revenge, and Lust :  
Such as the Souls of Cowards might conceive,  
And, form'd like Tyrants, Tyrants wou'd believe.

The ancient Pagan Gods are here very exactly  
described. This Fact is a convincing Evidence  
of the Truth of that Original which the Poet  
gives to Superstition: For if these Phantasms were  
first rais'd in the Imagination of Tyrants, they  
must needs have the Qualities here assigned them.  
For *Force* being the Tyrant's *Virtue*, and *Luxury*  
his *Happiness*, the Attributes of his God would of  
Course be *Revenge* and *Lust*; in a Word, the *An-*  
*titype* of himself. But there was another, and more  
substantial Cause, of the Resemblance between a  
*Tyrant* and a *Pagan God*; and that was the making  
*Gods of Conquerors*, as the Poet says, and so ca-  
nonizing a Tyrant's *Vices* with his *Person*. That  
these Gods should suit a People humbled to the  
Stroke of a Master, will be no Wonder, if we  
recollect a generous Saying of the *Ancients*;—  
*That, that Day which sees a Man a Slave, takes*  
*away half his Virtue.*

K The

The Inference our Poet draws from all this [from l. 269 to 284] is, that *Self-love* drives through Right and Wrong; it causes the Tyrant to violate the Rights of Mankind; and it causes the People to vindicate that Violation. For *Self-love* being common to the whole Species, and setting each Individual in pursuit of the same Objects, it became necessary for each, if he would secure his own, to provide for the Safety of another's. And thus Equity and Benevolence arose from that same *Self-love*, which had given Birth to Avarice and Injustice.

For what one likes, if others like as well,  
What serves one Will, when many Wills rebel?  
How shall he keep, what sleeping or awake  
A Weaker may surprise, a Stronger take?  
His Safety must his Liberty restrain;  
All join to guard what each desires to gain.

The Poet hath not any where shewn greater Address in the masterly Disposition of his Work, than with regard to the *Inference* before us; which not only gives a proper and timely Support to what he had before advanced, in his *second Epistle*, concerning the Nature and Effects of *Self-love*; but is a necessary Introduction to what follows concerning the *Reformation of Religion and Society*, as we shall see presently.

The Poet hath now describ'd the Rise, Perfection, and Decay of *civil Policy* and *Religion*, in the more early Ages. But the Design had been  
imperfectly

imperfectly executed, had he here drop'd his Discourse; there was, after this, a Recovery from their several Corruptions. Accordingly, he hath chosen that happy Period for the Conclusion of his Song. But as good and ill Governments and Religions succeed one another without ceasing, he now, with great Judgment leaves *Facts*, and turns his Discourse [from l. 283 to 296] to speak of a more lasting Reform of Mankind, in the Invention of those *philosophic Principles*, by whose Observance a *Policy* and *Religion* may be for ever kept from sinking into *Tyranny* and *Superstition*.

'Twas then the studious Head, or gen'rous Mind,  
Foll'wer of God, or Friend of human Kind,  
Poet or Patriot rose, but to restore  
The Faith and Morals, Nature gave before;  
Relum'd her ancient Light, not kindled new,  
If not God's Image, yet his Shadow drew;  
Taught Pow'r's due Use to People and to Kings,  
Taught not to slack, nor strain its tender  
Strings, &c.

The easy and just Transition into this Subject, from the foregoing, is admirable. In the foregoing, he had described the *Effects* of *Self-love*; now the *Observation* of these Effects, he, with great Art and high Probability, makes the *Occasion* of those *Discoveries*, which speculative Men made of the *true Principles* of Policy and Religion, described in the present Paragraph; and this he evidently hints at in that fine Transition,

K 2

'Twas

'Twas THEN the studious Head, &c.

Mr. *De Croufaz*, who saw nothing of this Beauty, says, — *It is not easy to guess to what Epoch Mr. Pope would have us refer his THEN* <sup>a</sup>. He has indeed proved himself no good *Gueffer*, which yet is the best Quality of a Critic. I will therefore tell him without more ado, — Mr. *Pope* meant the *polite and flourishing Age of Greece*; and those Benefactors to Mankind, which, I presume, he had principally in View, were *Socrates* and *Aristotle*, who, of all the Pagan World, spoke best of *God*, and wrote best of *Government*.

Having thus described the *true Principles of civil and ecclesiastical Policy*, the great Poet proceeds (from l. 295 to 305] to illustrate his Account by the similar Harmony of the Universe:

Such is the World's great Harmony, that springs  
From Union, Order, full Consent of Things!  
Where small and great, where weak and mighty,  
made,

To serve, not suffer, strengthen, not invade,  
More powerful each as needful to the rest,  
And in proportion as it blesses, blest,  
Draw to one Point, and to one Centre bring  
Beast, Man, or Angel, Servant, Lord, or King.

Thus, as in the *Beginning* of this Epistle, he supported the *great Principle of mutual Love or Affiliation in general*, by Considerations drawn from

<sup>a</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 261.

the

the *Properties* of Matter, and the mutual *Dependence* between vegetable and animal Life; so, in the *Conclusion*, he has inforced the *particular Principles* of civil and religious Society, from that *universal Harmony* which springs, in part, from those *Properties* and *Dependencies*.

But now the Poet, having so much commended the Invention and Inventors of the *philosophic Principles* of Religion and Government, lest an evil Use should be made of this, by Men's resting in *Theory* and *Speculation*, as they have been always too apt to do, in Matters whose *Practice* makes their Happiness, he cautions his Reader [from l. 304 to 311] against this Error, in a *Warmth of Expression*, which the sublime Ideas of that *universal Harmony*, operating incessantly to *universal Good*, had raised up in him.

For *Forms* of Government let Fools contest;  
 Whate'er is best administer'd is best.  
 For *Modes* of Faith let graceless Zealots fight;  
 His can't be wrong, whose Life is in the Right.  
 All must be false, that thwart this one great End,  
 And all of God, that bless Mankind, or mend.

The Seasonableness of this Reproof will appear evident enough to those who know, that mad Disputes about *Liberty* and *Prerogative* had once well nigh overturned our Constitution; and that others about *Mystery* and *Church Authority* had almost destroyed the very Spirit of our holy Religion.

But these fine Lines have been strangely mis-

● K 3 understood:

understood: The Author, against his own express Words, against the plain Sense of his System, has been conceived to mean, *That all Governments and all Religions were, as to their Forms and Objects, indifferent.* But as this wrong Judgment proceeded from Ignorance of the *Reason* of the Re-proof, as explained above, that Explanation is alone sufficient to rectify the Mistake.

However, not to leave him under the least Suspicion, in a Matter of so much Importance, I shall justify the Sense here given to this Passage more at large. First by considering the *Words themselves*: And then by comparing this mistaken Sense with the Context.

The Poet, we must observe, is here speaking, not of civil Society *at large*, but of a *just* legitimate Policy,

Th'according Music of a WELL-MIX'D State.

Now these are of several Kinds; in some of which the *Democratic*, in others the *Aristocratic*, and in others the *Monarchic* FORM prevails. Now as each of these *mix'd Forms* is equally legitimate, as being founded on the Principles of natural Liberty, that Man is guilty of the highest *Folly*, who chuses rather to employ himself in a speculative Contest for the superior Excellence of one of these Forms to the rest, than in promoting the good Administration of that settled *Form* to which he is subject. And yet all our warm Disputes about Government have been of this kind. Again, if,  
by



by *Forms of Government*, must needs be meant *legitimate Government*, because that is the Subject under Debate, then by *Modes of Faith*, which is the correspondent Idea, must needs be meant the Modes or *Explanations* of the *true Faith*, because the Author is here too on the Subject of *true Religion*:

Relum'd her ancient Light, not kindled new.

Besides, the very Expression (than which nothing can be more precise) confines us to understand, by *Modes of Faith*, those human Explanations of Christian Mysteries, in contesting which, Zeal and Ignorance have so perpetually violated Charity.

*Secondly*, If we consider the *Context*; to suppose him to mean, that *all Forms of Government are indifferant*, is making him directly contradict the preceding Paragraph; where he extols the Patriot for discriminating the *true* from the *false* Modes of Government. He, says the Poet,

Taught Pow'r's due Use to People and to Kings,  
Taught not to slack, nor strain its tender Strings;  
The less and greater set so justly true,  
That touching one must strike the other too;  
'Till jarring Int'rests of themselves create  
Th' according Music of a well-mix'd State.

Here he recommends the *true* Form of Government, which is the *mixt*. In another Place he as strongly condemns the *false*, or the absolute *Jure Divino* Form:

K 4

For

For Nature knew no *Right Divine* in Men.

l. 237.

To suppose him to mean, *that all Religions are indifferent*, is an equally wrong as well as uncharitable Suspicion. Mr. *Pope*, tho' his Subject in this *Essay on Man* confines him to *natural Religion* (his Purpose being to vindicate God's natural Dispensations to Mankind against the Atheist) yet gives frequent Intimations of a more sublime Dispensation, and even of the Necessity of it; particularly in his *second Epistle* [l. 139] where he speaks of the *Weakness and Insufficiency of human Reason*°.

Again, in his fourth Epistle [l. 331] speaking of the good Man, the Favourite of Heaven, he says,

For him alone, *Hope* leads from Gole to Gole,  
And opens still, and opens on his Soul;  
Till lengthen'd on to *Faith*, and unconfin'd,  
It pours the Bliss that fills up all the Mind.

But *natural Religion* never lengthened *Hope* on to *Faith*; nor did any Religion, but the Christian, ever conceive that *Faith* could fill the Mind with Happiness.

*Lastly*, The Poet, in this very Epistle, and in this very Place, speaking of the great Restorers of the Religion of Nature, intimates that they could only draw God's *Shadow*, not his *Image*:

Relum'd her ancient Light, not kindled new,  
If not *God's Image*, yet his *Shadow* drew.

° See the second Letter, p. 88.

As

As reverencing that Truth, which tells us that this Discovery was reserv'd *for the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the IMAGE OF GOD* <sup>P</sup>.

Having thus largely considered Man in his *social Capacity*, the Poet, in order to fix a momentous Truth in the Mind of his Reader, concludes the Epistle in recapitulating the *two Principles* which concur to the Support of *this Part* of his Character, namely, *Self-love* and *social*; and shewing that they are only two different Motions of the *Appetite, to Good*, by which the Author of Nature has enabled Man to find *his own Happiness* in the Happiness of the *Whole*. This the Poet illustrates with a Thought as sublime as is that general Harmony he describes :

On their own Axis as the Planets run,  
Yet make at once their Circle round the Sun;  
So two consistent Motions act the Soul,  
And one regards itself, and one the Whole.  
Thus God and Nature link'd the gen'ral Frame,  
And bad *Self-love* and *social* be the same.

For he hath the Art of converting Poetical Ornaments into Philosophic Reasoning; and of improving a *Simile* into an *Analogical Argument*. But of this Art, more in our Next.

P 2 Cor. iv. 4.

LETTER

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## LETTER IV.

**T**HE Poet, in the two foregoing Epistles having considered MAN with regard to the MEANS (that is, *in all his Relations*, whether as an *Individual*, or a Member of *Society*) comes now, in this last, to consider him with regard to the END, that is, HAPPINESS.

It opens with an *Invocation to Happiness*, in the Manner of the ancient Poets, who, when destitute of a Patron God, applied to the *Muse*, and, if she was engaged, took up with any simple *Virtue*, next at hand, to inspire and prosper their Designs. This was the *ancient Invocation*, which few modern Poets have had the Art to imitate with any degree of Spirit or Decorum; while our Author, not content to heighten this poetic Ornament with the Graces of the *Antique*, hath also contrived to make it subservient to the Method and Reasoning of his philosophic Composition. I will endeavour to explain so uncommon a Beauty.

It is to be observed that the Pagan Deities had each their *several Names* and *Places of Abode*, with some of which they were supposed to be  
more

more delighted than with others, and consequently to be then most propitious when invoked by the favourite *Name* and *Place*: Hence we find the Hymns of *Homer*, *Orpheus*, and *Callimachus*, to be chiefly employed in enumerating the several Names and Places of Abode by which the Patron God was distinguished. Now, our Poet, with great and masterly Address, hath made these *two Circumstances* serve to introduce his Subject, according to the exactest Rules of Logic. His Purpose is to write of *Happiness*; Method therefore requires that he first define what Men mean by *Happiness*, and this he does in the Ornament of a poetic *Invocation*:

O *Happiness*! our Being's End and Aim,  
Good, Pleasure, Ease, Content! whate'er thy  
NAME.

After the DEFINITION, that which follows next, in order of Method, is the PROPOSITION, which here is, *that human Happiness consists not in external Advantages, but in Virtue*. For the Subject of this Epistle is the detecting the *false* Notions of Happiness, and settling and explaining the *true*; and this the Poet lays down in the next sixteen Lines. Now the Enumeration of *Happiness's* several supposed *Places of Abode* (which, in Imitation of the ancient Poets, he next mentions in the *Invocation*, and which makes ten of the sixteen Lines) is a Summary of *false Happiness*, placed in *Externals*.

Plant

Plant of Celestial Seed ! if dropt below,  
 Say in what mortal Soil thou deign'st to grow ?  
 Fair op'ning to some *Court's* propitious Shine,  
 Or deep with *Di'monds* in the flaming Mine ?  
 Twin'd with the Wreaths *Parnassian Laurels*  
 yield,

Or reap'd in *Iron Harvests* of the Field ?

The six remaining Lines deliver the *true* Notion of Happiness to be in *Virtue*. Which is summ'd up in these two ;

Fixt to no Spot is Happiness sincere,  
 'Tis no where to be found, or ev'ry where.

The Poet, having thus *defined* his *Terms*, and laid down his *Proposition*, proceeds to the Support of his *Thesis* ; the various Arguments of which make up the body of the Epistle.

He begins [from l. 18 to 27] with detecting the *false* *Notions of Happiness*. These are of two kinds, the *Philosophical* and *Popular* : The latter he had recapitulated in the *Invocation*, when *Happiness* was call'd upon at her several supposed Places of Abode ; the *Philosophic* then only remained to be delivered.

Ask of the *Learn'd* the Way, the Learn'd are blind,

This bids to *serve*, and that to *shun* Mankind :  
 Some place the Bliss in *Action*, some in *Ease*,  
 Those call it Pleasure, and Contentment these.

The Confutation of these *Philosophic* Errors, he shews to be very easy, *one common Fallacy* running through

through them all; namely this, That, instead of telling us in what the *Happiness of human Nature* consists, which was what was asked of them, each busies himself to explain in what he placed *his own peculiar Happiness*:

Who thus define it, say they more or less  
Than this, that Happiness is Happiness?

And here, before we go any farther, it will be proper to turn to our *Logician*, who, blind to these Beauties in the admirable Disposition of the Subject, is extremely scandalized at the Poet for not proceeding immediately to explain *true Happiness* (after having defined his Terms and delivered his Thesis) but for going back again (as he fancies) to a Consideration of the *false*.—Speaking of the sixteen Lines, he says—"Happiness is then  
"near me, and I feel myself considerably refresh-  
"ed, but, by ill Luck, it is only for a Moment,  
"my Doubts presently return, and I find myself  
"in the Hands of a Poet, who can do what he  
"will with me, and who having placed me on  
"the very Borders of Happiness, on a sudden  
"shuts up all its Avenues<sup>1</sup>."

But a very little *Patience* and *Impartiality* would have shewn him, that they were immediately laid open again in the very next Lines [from 26 to 33] where the Poet shews, that if you will but take the Road of *Nature*, and leave that of *mad Opinion*, you will soon find Happiness to be

<sup>1</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 271.

a Good of the Species, and, like common Sense, equally distributed to all Mankind :

Take Nature's Path, and mad Opinion's leave,  
All States can reach it, and all Heads conceive ;  
Obvious her Goods, in no Extreme they dwell,  
There needs but thinking right, and meaning well ;  
And mourn our various Portions as we please,  
Equal is common Sense, and common Ease.

But this is so far from satisfying our Bully-Critic, that it only furnishes him with fresh Matter for a Quarrel. He is much offended at the two first Lines. " — I must here renew my Complaints. " Take Nature's Path, you say ; and what am I to " understand by this Nature ? Must I take the *reasonable Nature* for my Guide ? But, according " to you, the Philosophers have consulted it to " no purpose. Shall I give myself up to the *Animal Nature* ? This would soon reduce me to " great Distresses. Encompassed with Doubts " and Difficulties, what have I left, but to suffer " myself to be born away by Chance or Hazard ? " And to conclude, that the Counsel here given of " taking *Nature's Path*, comes at length to this, to " march steddily on in the Footsteps of Fatality ! "

It would be hard indeed, if our Commentator could not find the Road to *Fatality*, in every Step the Poet takes. But here, in avoiding the Horns of his own chimerical *Dilemma*, he jumps upon it more awkwardly than usual. The Poet,

<sup>r</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 272, 273.

says



says he, must either mean the *Reasonable*, or the *Animal Nature*. Agreed. He could not mean the *Animal Nature*. This too is true. Nor the *Reasonable*. Why not? Because it stood the Philosophers in no stead. What then? Do you think he has ever the worse Opinion of it on that Account? They could not possibly have run into more Mistakes about *Happiness*, than you have about the Poet's *Meaning*: And yet, for all that, I apprehend he will think never the worse, either of *Reason* or *himself*.

But what is indeed incredible, after Mr. *De Crousaz* had thus commented the two first Lines, he goes on with his Remarks on the immediately following, *Obvious her Goods, &c.* in these Words: "See Mr. Pope once again under the Necessity of *restoring Reason to its Rights*." Prodigious! It seems then, after all, Mr. *Pope*, by *Nature's Path*, did indeed mean the *reasonable Nature*. For we now see it was Mr. *De Crousaz*, not Mr. *Pope*, that was under the Necessity of *restoring Reason to its Rights*.

To proceed, the Poet having exposed the *two false Species of Happiness*, the PHILOSOPHICAL and POPULAR, and denounced the *True*, in order to establish the *last*, goes on to a Confutation of the two *former*.

I. He first [from l. 32 to 47] confutes the PHILOSOPHICAL, which, as we said, makes Happiness a *particular*, not a *general Good*: And this two Ways:

‡ *Commentaire*, p. 281.

I. From

1. From his *grand Principle*, That *God acts by general Laws*: The Consequence of which is, that *Happiness*, which supports the well-being of every System, must needs be *Universal*, and not *Partial*, as the Philosophers conceived:

Remember, Man! *The universal Cause,*  
*Acts not by partial, but by gen'ral Laws;*  
 And makes, what Happiness we justly call,  
 Subsist not in the Good of One, but All.

2. From *Fact*, That Man instinctively concurs with this Designation of Providence, to make Happiness universal, by his having no Delight in any thing *uncommunicated* or *uncommunicable*:

There's not a Blessing Individuals find,  
 But some way leans and hearkens to the kind.  
 No Bandit fierce, no Tyrant mad with Pride,  
 No cavern'd Hermit rests self-satisfied.  
 Abstract what others feel, what others think,  
 All Pleasures sicken, and all Glories sink.

II. The Poet, in the second Place [from l. 46 to 65] confutes the POPULAR Error concerning *Happiness*, namely, that it consists in *Externals*: which he does,

1. By inquiring into the Reasons of the present providential Disposition of *external Goods*: A Topic of Confutation chosen with the greatest Accuracy and Penetration. For, if it appears *they* were distributed in the Manner we see them, for Reasons *different* from the *Happiness of Individuals*, it is

is absurd to think that they should make *Part* of that Happiness.

He shews therefore, that Disparity of external Possessions among Men was for the sake of *Society*, 1. to promote the Harmony and Happiness of a *System*:

Order is Heav'n's first Law; and, this confess,  
Some are, and must be, greater than the rest,  
More rich, more wise,—

Because the *Want* of external Goods in some, and the *Abundance* in others, increase general Harmony in the *Obliger* and *Obliged*.

Yet here (says he) mark the impartial Wisdom of Heaven; this very *Inequality of Externals*, by contributing to *general Harmony* and Order, produceth an *Equality of Happiness* amongst *Individuals*; and, *for that very reason*,

Heav'n to Mankind impartial we confess,  
If all are equal in their Happiness:  
But mutual Wants this Happiness increase,  
All Nature's Difference keeps all Nature's Peace.  
Condition, Circumstance is not the Thing:  
Bliss is the same, in Subject, or in King;  
In who obtain Defence, or who defend;  
In him who is, or him who finds, a Friend.  
Heav'n breaths thro' ev'ry Member of the Whole  
One common Blessing as one common Soul.

2. This Disparity was necessary, because, if external Goods were equally distributed, they would

L occasion

occasion perpetual Discord amongst Men all *equal* in Power :

But Fortune's Gifts if each alike possess,  
And each were equal, must not all contest ?

From hence he concludes, That, as *External Goods* were not given for the Reward of Virtue, but for many different Purposes, God could not, if he intended Happiness for all, place it in the Enjoyment of *Externals* :

If then to *all* Men Happiness was meant,  
God in Externals could not place Content.

2. His second Argument [from l. 64 to 71] against the *popular Error* of Happiness's being placed in *Externals*, is, that the *Possession* of them is inseparably attended with *Fear*, the *Want* of them with *Hope*; which directly crossing all their Pretensions to making happy, evidently shew that God had placed Happiness *elsewhere* :

Fortune her Gifts may variously dispose,  
And these be happy call'd, unhappy those ;  
But Heav'n's just Balance equal will appear,  
While those are plac'd in HOPE, and these in FEAR :  
Not present Good or Ill, the Joy or Curse,  
But future Views of better or of worse.

Hence, in concluding this Argument, he takes occasion [from l. 70 to 75] to upbraid the desperate Folly and Impiety of those, who, in spite of God and Nature, will yet attempt to place *Happiness* in *Externals*.

O Sons

O Sons of Earth! attempt ye still to rise,  
By Mountains pil'd on Mountains, to the Skies?  
Heav'n still with Laughter the vain Toil surveys,  
And buries Madmen in the Heaps they raise.

I must not here omit to observe, that the Translator (unconscious of all this fine Reasoning between the 32 and 75 Lines, where the Poet first confutes the *Philosophic* Errors concerning Happiness, and next the *Popular*) hath strangely jumbled together and confounded his different Arguments on these two different Heads. But this is not the worst; he hath perverted the Poet's Words to a horrid and senseless *Fatalism*, foreign to the Argument in hand, and directly contrary to Mr. Pope's general Principles.

The Poet says,

Remember, Man! the universal Cause;

Acts not by partial, but by gen'ral Laws.

His Translator,

— Une Loi generale

Determine toujours la Cause Principale.

That is, *a general Law ever determines the principal Cause*, which is the very *Fate* of the ancient Pagans, who supposed that Destiny gave Law to the *Father of Gods and Men*.

The Poet says again,

Order is Heav'n's first Law :

That is, *the first Law made by God, relates to Order*, which is a beautiful Allusion to the Scripture

L 2

History

History of the Creation, when God first appeased the Disorders of *Chaos*, and separated the Light from the Darkness. Let us now hear his Translator :

L'Ordre, cet inflexible et grand Législateur,  
Qui des decrets du Ciel est le premier Auteur :

*Order, that inflexible and grand Legislator, who is the first Author of the Laws of Heaven. A Proposition abominable in most Senses, and absurd in all.*

But now what says Mr. *De Croufaz* to this, who is perpetually crying out, *Fate! Fate!* as Men in Distraction call out *Fire?* The Reader will be surprized to hear him pass this cool Reflexion on two so obnoxious Passages.—“ *This Order, the first Author of Laws, presents us with very harsh Expressions, and bold Ideas, which Mr. Pope elsewhere condemns as rash and unjustifiable* \*. But this is his Moderation, when Mr. *L'Abbé* comes under his Critique: And we know, the excellent Prose Translation gave him the Advantage of knowing whom he had to do with.

To proceed, the Poet having thus confuted the two Errors concerning *Happiness*, PHILOSOPHICAL and POPULAR, and proved that true Happiness was neither *Solitary and Partial*, nor yet placed in *Externals*; goes on [from l. 74 to 91] to shew in what it *doth* consist. He had before said in general, and repeated it, that Happiness lay in com-

\* *Commentaire*, p. 282.

mon to the whole Species. He now brings us better acquainted with it, in a more explicate Information of its Nature; and tells us, it is all contained in *Health, Peace, and Competence*; but that these are to be gained only by VIRTUE, namely, by *Temperance, Innocence, and Industry*:

Reason's whole Pleasures, all the Joys of Sense,  
Lie in three Words, Health, Peace, and Competence.

But Health consists with Temperance alone,  
And Peace, O *Virtue*! Peace is all thy own.

The first Line,

*Reason's whole Pleasures, all the Joys of Sense,*

is the most beautiful Paraphrasis for *Happiness*; for all we feel of Good is by *Sensation* and *Reflection*. The Translator, who seemed little to concern himself with the Poet's Philosophy or Argument, mistook this Description of *Happiness* for a Description of the *intellectual and sensitive Faculties*, opposed to one another; and therefore thus translates it:

Le charme seducteur, dont s'enyvrant les Sens,  
Les Plaisirs de l'Esprit encore plus ravissans.

And so, with the highest Absurdity, not only makes the Poet constitute *sensual Excesses* a Part of human Happiness, but likewise the Product of Virtue.

After this, we shall no longer wonder at such kind of Translations as the following:

L 3                      Mr.

Mr. *Pope* says,

And Peace, O *Virtue* ! Peace is all thy own.

The Translator,

Pour vous, O Paix du Cœur, digne fille des Cieux,

Vous êtes du bonheur le gage précieux.

*Conscious Innocence*, says the Poet, is the only Source of internal Peace, and known Innocence of external; therefore Peace is the sole Issue of Virtue; or, in his own emphatic Words, Peace is ALL thy own; a conclusive Observation in his Argument. O Peace, says the Translator, thou art the precious Pledge of Happiness; an Observation, which concludes no more than that the Translator did not understand the Argument, which stands thus:—Is Happiness rightly placed in Externals? No, for it consists in Health, Peace, and Competence. Health and Competence are the Product of Temperance and Industry; and Peace, of perfect Innocence.

But hitherto, the Poet hath only considered *Health* and *Peace*:

But *Health* consists with Temperance alone,

And Peace, O *Virtue* ! Peace is all thy own.

One Head yet remains to be spoken to, namely, *Competence*. In the Pursuit of *Health* and *Peace* there is no Danger of running into Excess. But the Case is different with regard to *Competence*. Here, *Wealth* and *Affluence* would be too apt to be mistaken for it, in Mens passionate Pursuit of external Goods. To obviate this Mistake there-  
fore



fore, the Poet shews, that, as *exorbitant Wealth* adds nothing to the Happiness arising from a *Competence*, so, as it is generally ill-gotten, it is attended with Circumstances that weaken another Part of this triple Cord, namely, *Peace*:

The Good or Bad the Gifts of Fortune gain;  
But these less taste them as they worse obtain.  
Say, in Pursuit of Profit or Delight,  
Who risque the most, that take wrong Means or  
right?

Of Vice or Virtue, whether blest or curst,  
Which meets Contempt, or which Compassion  
first?

Count all th' Advantage prosp'rous Vice attains,  
'Tis but what Virtue flies from, and disdains;  
And grant the Bad what Happiness they wou'd,  
One they must want, which is, to pass for good.

Here Mr. *De Crousax's* Remarks are indeed very extraordinary, — “To whom (says he) are these  
“ Interrogatories addressed? — If you refer your-  
“ self to the Judgment of a Troop of young Li-  
“ bertines, such as are to be found in great Cities,  
“ and in Armies, you will certainly not have the  
“ Laughters on your Side, &c.<sup>b</sup>” What then?  
If *Reason* require they should, is not that suffi-  
cient for the Poet's Purpose, in a Discourse where  
*Reason* is continually appealed to, in a Contro-  
versy between him and them? But our Logician's  
Perversity is without Example. 'Till now, his

<sup>b</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 289, 290.

Quarrel with the Poet was, that his Arguments flattered the corrupt Sentiments of Libertinism. At present he is as captious with him for their opposing those Sentiments. Does not this look as if he were resolved to approve of nothing Mr. *Pope* could say?

Our Author having thus largely confuted the Mistake of *Happiness's consisting in Externals*, proceeds to expose the terrible CONSEQUENCES of such an Opinion, on the Sentiments and Practice of all Sorts of Men, making the DISSOLUTE impious and atheistical, the RELIGIOUS uncharitable and intolerant, and the GOOD restless and discontent. For when 'tis once taken for granted, that *Happiness consists in External*, it is immediately seen that *ill* Men are often more happy than *good*; which sets all Conditions on objecting to the Ways of Providence, and some even on rashly attempting to rectify its Dispensations, tho' by the Violation of Law, divine and human. Now this being the most momentous Part of the Subject under Consideration, is deservedly treated most at large. And here it will be proper to take notice of the exquisite Art of the Poet, in making this Confutation serve, at the same time, for a full Solution of all Objections which might be made to his main Proposition, *that Happiness consists not in Externals*.

I. He begins, first of all, with the ATHEISTICAL Complainers, and pursues their Impiety [from  
l. 90

l. 90 to 129] with all the Vengeance of his Eloquence.

Oh blind to Truth, and God's whole Scheme below!

Who fancy Blifs to Vice, to Virtue Woe:

Who sees and follows that great Scheme the best,  
Best knows the Blessing, and will most be blest.

He exposes their Folly, even on their own Notions of *external Goods*.

1. By *Examples* [from line 96 to 109] where he shews *first*, that, if good Men have been untimely cut off, this is not to be ascribed to their Virtues, but to a Contempt of Life that hurried them into Dangers. *Secondly*, That if they will still persist in ascribing *untimely Death* to Virtue, they must needs, on the same Principle, likewise ascribe *long Life* to it. Consequently as the Argument, in *Fact*, concludes both ways, in *Logic*, it concludes neither.

But Fools the *Good* alone unhappy call,  
From Ills or Accidents that chance to *all*.

Say, was it Virtue, more tho' Heav'n ne'er gave,  
Lamented *Digby*! sunk thee to the Grave?

Tell me, if Virtue made the Son expire,  
Why full of Days and Honour lives the Sire?

Why drew *Marseille's* good Bishop purer Breath,  
When Nature sicken'd, and each Gale was Death?  
Or why so long (in Life if long can be)

Lent Heav'n a Parent to the Poor, and me?

This last Instance of the Poet's Illustration of the Ways of Providence, the Reader sees has a peculiar

liar Elegance; where a Tribute of Piety to a Parent, is paid in a Return of Thanks to [*Less Heav'n a Parent, &c.*] and made subservient of [*Or why so long—*] his Vindication of, the Great Father of all Things.

2. He exposes their Folly [from line 108 to 129] by *Considerations drawn from the System of Nature*; and these, two-fold, *Natural* and *Moral*. You accuse God, says the Poet, because the good Man is subject to Natural and Moral Evil: Let us see whence these proceed. Natural Evil is the necessary Consequence of a material World so constituted: But that this Constitution was *best*, we have proved in the first Epistle. Moral Evil ariseth from the depraved Will of Man: Therefore neither the one nor the other from God.

What makes all Physical or Moral Ill?

There deviates Nature, and here wanders Will.

God sends not Ill, if rightly understood;

Or partial Ill is universal Good;

Or Chance admits, or Nature lets it fall,

Short, and but rare, 'till Man improv'd it all.

But you say (adds the Poet, to these impious Complainers) that tho' it be fit Man should suffer the Miseries which he brings upon himself, by the Commission of moral Evil, yet it seems to be unfit his innocent Posterity should bear a Share of them. To this, says he, I reply,

We just as wisely might of Heav'n complain

That righteous *Abel* was destroy'd by *Cain*,

As

As that the virtuous Son is ill at ease,  
When his lewd Father gave the dire Disease.

But you will still say (continues the Poet) why does not God either prevent, or immediately repair these Evils? You may as well ask, why he doth not work continual Miracles, and every Moment reverse the established Laws of Nature:

Shall burning *Ætna*, if a Sage requires,  
Forget to thunder, and recal her Fires?  
On Air or Sea new Motions be imprest,  
O blameless *Bethel*! to relieve thy Breast?  
When the loose Mountain trembles from on high,  
Shall Gravitation cease, if you go by?  
Or, some old Temple nodding to its Fall,  
For *Chartres*' Head reserve the hanging Wall?

This is the Force of the Poet's Reasoning, and these the Men to whom he addresses it, namely, the *Libertine* Cavillers against Providence.

II. But now, so unhappy is the Condition of our corrupt Nature, that these are not the only Complainers. *Religious* Men are but too apt, if not to *speak out*, yet sometimes secretly to *murmur* against Providence, and say, *its Ways are not equal*: Especially those more inordinately devoted to a Sect or Party are scandalized, that the JUST (for such they esteem themselves) *who are to judge the World*, have no better *Portion in their own Inheritance*. The Poet therefore now leaves those more *profligate* Complainers, and turns [from line 128 to 147] to the *Religious*, in these Words:

But

But still this World (so fitted for the Knave)  
 Contents us not. A better shall we have?  
 A *Kingdom of the Just* then let it be,  
 But first consider how those *Just* agree.

As the more impious Complainers wanted external Goods to be the Reward of Virtue for the *moral* Man; so these want them for the *Pious*, in order to have a *Kingdom of the Just*. To this the Poet holds it sufficient to answer: Pray, Gentlemen, first agree amongst yourselves, who *those Just* are. We allow,

The Good must merit God's peculiar Care,  
 But who but God can tell us who they are?  
 One thinks on *Calvin* Heav'n's own Spirit fell,  
 Another deems him Instrument of Hell:  
 If *Calvin* feels Heav'n's Blessing or its Rod,  
 This cries, There is, and that, There is no God.

As this is the Case, he even bids them rest satisfied; remember his fundamental Principle, *That whatever is, is right*; and content themselves (as their Religion teaches them to profess a more than ordinary Submission to the Ways of Providence) with that common Answer which he with so much Reason and Piety gives to every Kind of Complainer.

However, tho' there be yet no Kingdom of the *Just*, there is still no Kingdom of the *Unjust*. That both the *Virtuous* and the *Vicious*, whatsoever becomes of those whom every Sect calls the *Faithful*, have their Shares in external Goods;  
 and

and, what is more, the *Virtuous* have infinitely the most Enjoyment in them :

— This World, 'tis true,  
Was made for *Cæsar*, but for *Titus* too :  
And which more *blest* ? who chain'd his Country,  
say,  
Or he whose Virtue sigh'd to lose a Day ?

I have been the more careful to explain this last Argument, and to shew against whom it is directed, because much depends upon it for the Illustration of the Sense, and the just Defence of the Poet. For if we suppose him still addressing himself to those *impious* Complainers, confuted in the thirty-eight preceding Lines, we should make him guilty of a *Parallogism* in the Argument about the *Just*, and in the Illustration of it by the Case of *Calvin*. For then the Libertines ask, Why the *Just*, that is, the *moral Man*, is not rewarded ? The Answer is, That none but God can tell, who the *Just*, that is, the *truly faithful Man*, is. Where the Term is changed, in order to support the Argument ; for about the *truly Moral Man* there is no Dispute ; about the *truly Faithful*, or the *Orthodox*, a great deal. But take the Poet right, as arguing here against *religious* Complainers, and the Reasoning is strict and logical. They ask, Why the *truly Faithful* are not rewarded ? He answers, They may be for ought you know, for none but God can tell who they are. Mr. *De Crousaz's* Objections to this Reasoning receive all their Force from that  
wrong

wrong Supposition, That the Poet was here arguing against *Libertine* Complainers; and consequently they have no Force at all.

III. The Poet having dispatched these two Species of Complainers, comes now to the third and still more pardonable Sort, the discontented *good Men*, who lament only, that *Virtue starves, while Vice riots*. To these the Poet replies [from l. 146 to 155] that admit this to be the Case, yet they have no Reason to complain, either of the good Man's Lot in particular, or of the Dispensation of Providence in general. Not of the *former*, because *Happiness*, the Reward of Virtue, consists not in *Externals*; nor of the *latter*, because ill Men may gain Wealth by commendable Industry, good Men want Necessaries through Indolence or bad Conduct.

But as modest as this Complaint seems at first View, the Poet next shews [from l. 154 to 165] that it is founded on a Principle of the highest Extravagance, which will never let the discontented *good Man* rest, till he becomes as vain and foolish in his Imaginations as the very worst sort of Complainers. For that when once he begins to think he wants what is his due, he will never know where to stop, while God has any thing to give.

But this is not all, he proves next [from l. 164 to 175] that these Demands are not only *unreasonable*, but in the highest degree *absurd* likewise, For that those very *Goods*, if granted, would be the  
*Destru-*



*Destruction* of that *Virtue* for which they are demanded as a *Reward*. He concludes therefore on the whole, that,

What nothing earthly gives, or can destroy,  
The Soul's calm Sunshine, and the heart-felt Joy,  
Is Virtue's Prize. —

But the Poet now enters more at large upon the Matter: And still continuing his Discourse to this *third* Sort of Complainers (whom he indulges as much more pardonable than the *first* or *second*, in rectifying all their Doubts and Mistakes) proves both from *Reason* and *Example*, how unable any of those things are, which the World most admires, to make a *good* Man *happy*. For, as to the *philosophic* Mistakes concerning Happiness, there being little Danger of their making a general Impression, the Poet, after a short Confutation, had dismissed them all together. But *external Goods* are those Syrens, which so bewitch the World with Dreams of *Happiness*, that of all Things the most difficult is, to awaken it out of its Delusions; tho', as he proves, in an exact Review of the most Pretending, they dishonour *bad* Men, and add no Lustre to the *Good*. That it is only this third and least criminal Sort of Complainers, against which the remaining Part of the Discourse is levelled, appears from the Poet's so frequently addressing himself, while he enforces his Arguments in Behalf of Providence, from henceforward to his Friend.

I. He begins therefore [from line 174 to 195]  
with

with considering RICHES. 1. He examines first, what there is of *real* Value in them, and shews, they can give the *good* Man only that very Contentment he had before, or, at most, but burthen him with a Trust to be dispensed for the Benefit of others :

For *Riches*, can they give but to the Just  
His *own* Contentment, or *another's* Trust?

Since the *good* Man esteems all, beside what is sufficient to supply him with the Conveniencies of Life, as entrusted to him by Providence, for the Supplial of others Necessities.

'Tis true, he tells us elsewhere, that another Sort of *good* Men are of a different Opinion :

The grave Sir Gilbert holds it for a Rule,  
That *ev'ry* Man in Want is Knave or Fool:

God cannot love (says *Blunt*, with lifted Eyes)

The Wretch he starves—and piously denies.

*Of the Use of Riches*, l. 103

And these are they to whom he here alludes, where he says,

O Fool! to think God hates the worthy Mind,  
The Lover, and the Love, of Human-kind,  
Whose Life is healthful, and whose Conscience  
clear,

Because he wants a thousand Pounds a Year!

The Poet next examines the *imaginary* Value of Riches, as the Fountain of *Honour*. For his Adversaries Objection stands thus:—As Honour is the genuine Claim of Virtue, and Shame the just Retribution

tribution of Vice; and as *Honour*, in their Opinion, follows Riches, and Shame Poverty; therefore the *good Man* should be *rich*. — He tells them in this they are much mistaken:

Honour and Shame from no Condition rise;  
Act well your Part, there all the Honour lies.

What Power then has *Fortune* over the *Man*? None at all. For, as her *Favours* can confer neither Worth nor *Wisdom*; so neither can her *Displeasure* cure him of any of his *Follies*. On his *Garb* indeed she has some little Influence; but his *Heart* still remains the same:

*Fortune* in Men has some small Diff'rence made,  
One *flaunts* in Rags, one *flutters* in Brocade.

II. Then, as to NOBILITY, by *Creation* or *Birth*, this too he shews [from l. 195 to 207] is, in itself, as devoid of all real Worth as the rest: Because, in the *first Case* the *Title* is generally gained by no Merit at all;

Stuck o'er with Titles, and hung round with  
Strings,  
That thou may'st be by Kings, or Whores of  
Kings.

In the *second*, by the Merit of the first Founder of the Family, which will always, when reflected on, be rather the Subject of *Mortification* than *Glory*:

Go! if your ancient, but ignoble, Blood  
Has crept thro' Scoundrels ever since the Flood,  
M Go!

Go! and pretend your Family is young;  
Nor own your Fathers have been Fools so long.

III. The Poet in the next Place [from l. 206 to 227] unmasks the false Pretences of GREATNESS, whereby it is seen that the *Hero* and *Politician* (the two Characters which would monopolize that Quality) after all their Bustle, effect only this, if they want Virtue, that the one proves himself a *Fool*, and the other a *Knave*: And *Virtue* they but too generally want. The *Art of Heroism* being understood to consist in Ravage and Desolation; and the *Art of Politics*, in Circumvention. Now

—Grant that those can conquer, these can cheat,  
'Tis Phrase absurd to call a *Villain*, Great:  
Who wickedly is wise, or madly brave,  
Is but the more a *Fool*, the more a *Knave*.

It is not *Success* therefore that constitutes *true Greatness*; but the *End aimed at*; and the *Means* which are *employed*: And if these be right, Glory will be the *Reward*, whatever be the *Issue*:

Who noble Ends by noble Means obtains,  
Or failing, smiles in Exile or in Chains,  
Like good *Aurelius* let him reign, or bleed  
Like *Socrates*, that Man is great indeed.

IV. With regard to FAME, that still more fantastic Blessing, he shews [from l. 226 to 249] that all of it, besides what we hear ourselves, is merely nothing; and that even of this small Portion, no more of it gives the Possessor a real Satisfaction, than what is the Fruit of Virtue.

All

All *Fame* is foreign, but of true Desert,  
Plays round the *Head*, but comes not near the  
*Heart*.

Thus he shews, that *Honour*, *Nobility*, *Greatness*,  
*Glory*, so far as they have any thing real and sub-  
stantial, that is, so far as they contribute to the  
*Happiness* of the Possessor, are the sole Issue of  
*Virtue*, and that neither *Riches*, *Courts*, *Armies*,  
nor the *Populace*, are capable of conferring them.

V. But lastly, the Poet proves [from l. 248 to  
259] that as *no external* Goods can make Man  
happy, so neither is it in the Power of *all internal*.  
For, that even SUPERIOR PARTS bring no more  
real Happiness to the Possessor, than the rest, nay,  
put him into a worse Condition; for that the  
Quickness of Apprehension, and Depth of Pene-  
tration do but sharpen the Miseries of Life:

In Parts superior, what Advantage lies?  
Tell (for You can) what is it to be wise?  
'Tis but to know how little can be known;  
To see all others Faults, and feel our own, &c.  
Painful Pre-eminence! yourself to view  
*Above Life's Weakness, and its COMFORTS too.*

This to his Friend—nor does it at all contradict  
what he had said to him concerning *Happiness* in  
the Beginning of the Epistle:

'Tis never to be bought, but always free,  
And fled from Monarchs, *St. John!* dwells with  
thee.

For he is now proving that nothing either exter-

nal to Man, or what is not in his own Power, and of his own Acquirement, can make him happy *here*. The most plausible Rival of *Virtue* is *Knowledge*. Yet even this, he says, is so far from giving any degree of real Happiness, that it deprives Men of those *common Comforts* of Life, which are a kind of Support to us under the Want of *Happiness*: Such as the more innocent of those *Delusions* which he speaks of in the second Epistle, where he says,

Till then, Opinion gilds with varying Rays  
Those painted Clouds, that beautify our Days, &c.  
l. 265.

Now *Knowledge* (as is here said) *destroys* all those Comforts, by setting Man *above Life's Weaknesses*: So that in him, who thinks to attain *Happiness* by *Knowledge*, the *Fable* is reversed, and in a preposterous Attempt to gain the *Substance*, he loses even the *Shadow*. This I take to be the true Sense of this fine Stroke of Satire, on the wrong Pursuits after *Happiness*.

Having thus proved how empty and unsatisfactory all these Greatest external Goods, are, from an Examination of their Nature, the Poet proceeds to strengthen his Argument [from l. 258 to 299] by these two *farther* Considerations,

1<sup>st</sup>, That the Acquirement of these Goods is made with the Loss of one another; or of greater, either as inconsistent with them, or as spent in attaining them:

How

How much of other each is sure to cost?  
 How each for other oft is wholly lost?  
 How inconsistent greater Goods with these?  
 How sometimes Life is risqu'd, and always Ease?

2dly, That the Possessors of each of these Goods are generally such as are so far from raising Envy in a good Man, that he would refuse to take their Persons, tho' accompanied with their Possessions. And this the Poet illustrates by Examples:

Think, and if still the Things thy Envy call,  
 Say, would'st thou be the Man to whom they fall? &c.

3dly, Nay, that even the Possession of them all together, where they have excluded Virtue, only terminates in more enormous Misery:

If all, united, thy Ambition call,  
 From ancient Story learn to scorn them all.  
 There, in the *Rich*, the *Honour'd*, *Fam'd*, and *Great*,  
 See the false Scale of Happiness complete!  
 Mark by what wretched Steps their Glory grows,  
 From Dirt and Sea-weed, as proud *Venice* rose, &c.

Having thus at length shewn, that *Happiness* consists neither in *any external* Goods, nor in *all* kinds of *internal*, that is, such of them as are not of our own Acquirement, he concludes [from l. 298 to 301] that it is to be found in VIRTUE ALONE:

Know then this Truth (enough for Man to know).  
 Virtue alone is Happiness below.

Which the Translator turns thus:

Appren donc qu'il n'est point icy bas de *Bonheur*  
*Si la Vertu ne regle et l'Esprit, et le Cœur.*

i. e. *Learn therefore that there is no Happiness here below, if Virtue does not regulate the Heart and the Understanding,* which destroys the whole Force of the Poet's Conclusion. He had proved, that Happiness consists neither in *external Goods*, as the *Vulgar* imagined, nor yet in the *visionary Pursuits* of the *Philosophers*: He therefore concludes that it consists in VIRTUE ALONE. His Translator says, *without Virtue there can be no Happiness.* And so say the Men against whom the Poet is here arguing. For tho' they supposed *external Goods* requisite to Happiness, yet it was, when enjoy'd according to the Rules of Virtue. Mr. Pope says,

*Virtue ALONE is Happiness below,*  
 and so ought his Translator to have said after him.

Hitherto the Poet had proved, NEGATIVELY, that *Happiness consists in Virtue*, by shewing it consisted not in any other thing. He now [from l. 300 to 317] proves the same POSITIVELY, by an Enumeration of its *Qualities*, all naturally adapted to give, and to increase human Happiness: As its *Constancy, Capacity, Vigour, Efficacy, Activity, Moderation,* and *Self-sufficiency*:

The only Point where human Bliss stands still,  
 And tastes the Good, without the Fall to Ill;  
 Without Satiety, tho' e'er so blest'd,  
 And but more relish'd, as the more distress'd:

Good,



Good, from each Object, from each Place, ac-  
quir'd,

For ever exercis'd, yet never tir'd;  
Never elated, while one Man's oppress'd;  
Never dejected, while another's bless'd;  
And where no Wants, no Wishes can remain,  
Since, but to wish more Virtue, is to gain.

Having thus proved that *Happiness* is indeed placed in *Virtue*, he proves next [from l. 316 to 319] that it is RIGHTLY placed there: For, that *then*, and *then only*, ALL may partake of it, and ALL be capable of relishing it:

See the sole Bliss Heav'n *could* on ALL bestow,  
Which who but feels can taste, but thinks can  
know.

The Poet then observes, with some Indignation, [from l. 318 to 331] that as easy and as evident as this Truth was, yet *Riches* and *false Philosophy* had so blinded the Perception, even of *improved Minds*, that the Possessors of the *first* placed Happiness in *Externals*, unsuitable to Man's *Nature*; and the Followers of the *latter* in refined *Visions*, unsuitable to his *Situation*: While the simple-minded Man, with NATURE only for his Guide, found plainly in what it should be placed:

Yet poor with *Fortune*, and with *Learning* blind,  
The Bad must miss, the Good untaught will find;  
Slave to no Sect, who takes no private Road,  
But looks thro' *Nature* up to *Nature's God*.

M 4 Pursues

Pursues that Chain, which links th' immense Design,  
 Joins Heav'n and Earth, and Mortal and Divine.  
 Sees that no Being any Bliss can know,  
 But touches some above, and some below;  
 Learns, from this Union of the rising *Whole*,  
 The first last Purpose of the human Soul;  
 And knows where Faith, Law, Morals, all began,  
 All end, in LOVE OF GOD, AND LOVE OF MAN.

To this Mr. *De Croufaz*,—"I made my Remarks as I went along, in reading the Poem of Mr. *Du Resnel*; and, in Proportion as I advanced in it, I have had the most agreeable Satisfaction to find, that my Commentaries have been too hasty and immature on this Poem; in so clear a Light has the illustrious *Abbé* placed those Truths, which the Prose Translator had delivered with much less Preciseness. In this Translation I evidently meet with the sacred Terms of *Faith*, *Hope*, and *Charity*; but I don't know where he had them. And it is not easy for me to find, how the Ideas which I have been accustomed to fix to them can agree with them. I am puzzled to know what they have to do here<sup>a</sup>."

This, to use our Critic's own Words, is a Specimen of that *Galimatias*, which runs through his whole Commentary. He suspects, he approves,

<sup>a</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 332.

he

he doubts, he applauds; but it all ends in Calumny and Condemnation. Here you have an old Veteran Controversialist of seventy-five, who gives the World his *second Thoughts* (for he had published his *Examen* before he wrote his *Commentary*) telling us that he scribbled at random, and made the greatest Part of his Remarks before he had read over the Book he wrote against: A Book that contains a regular, well-digested System, whose Parts, having a mutual Dependence, necessarily support and illustrate one another. But if a Man would make so free with himself as to tell this strange Story to the World, which certainly he had a Right to do, he should, as his moral Character was concerned, have made Satisfaction for his Folly, by striking out all those odious Imputations with which the foregoing Part of his Commentary abounds. Instead of this, he was not only content to leave the Calumnies of *Fatalism* and *Spinozism* un-retracted; but has thought fit to renew them, even after this Confession of his hasty, *immature* Way of Writing. Ah! *misera mens hominis*, quo te *fatum* sæpissime trahit! What but this could have forced him to write a whole Book in Contradiction to the very *Principle* he himself lays down to proceed by? *An over-scrupulous Exactitude* (says he) *would hurt the very End of Poetry. But we must make it a Law to interpret one Expression by another, for fear of attributing Notions*

to

170 A COMMENTARY on  
to a Poet that would be injurious to him<sup>b</sup>.

But to return: This is not all; the Poet shews farther [from l. 330 to 343] that, when the simple-minded Man, on his first setting out in the Pursuit of Truth, in order to Happiness, has had the Wisdom

*To look thro' Nature up to Nature's God,*  
instead of adhering to any Sect or Party, where there was so great Odds of his chusing wrong; That then the Benefit of gaining the *Knowledge of God's Will written in the Mind*, is not there confined; for that standing on this *sure Foundation*, he is now *no longer* in Danger of chusing wrong, amidst such *Diversities* of Religions; but by pursuing this grand Scheme of Universal Benevolence, in *Practice*, as well as *Theory*, he arrives at length to the *Knowledge of the revealed Will of God*, which is the *Consummation* of the *System of Benevolence*:

For him alone *Hope* leads from Gole to Gole,  
And opens still, and opens on his Soul,  
Till lengthen'd on to FAITH, and unconfin'd,  
It pours the Bliss, that fills up all the Mind.

But let us once more hear Mr. *De Croufaz*: "We  
" are brought (says he) at length to the *Truths of*  
" *Revelation*.—See Man once again re-established in  
" his Rights, raised as far above Brutes as Heaven  
" is above the Earth. How infinite a Difference

<sup>b</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 196.

" between

“ between what one reads in this *fourth* Epistle,  
 “ and what the Poet ventured to propose in the  
 “ *first*, and in part of the *two following*? There,  
 “ corrupt Minds *thought* they read their own Sen-  
 “ timents; and even this, which we find here, is  
 “ insufficient to bring them back again from their  
 “ Preventions.”

That the *three first* Epistles have nothing contrary to the *fourth*, we have not only sufficiently evinced, but shewn likewise, that the Doctrine of this *last*, so much approved by Mr. *De Croufaz*, is the necessary Consequence of that laid down in every one of the *preceding*, so much condemned by him. But, that *corrupt Minds thought they read their own Sentiments there*, nay, that it will be hard to bring them back again from their Preventions, I can easily conceive; because, not only *Partiality* to Mens own Opinions, but *Prejudice* against the Opinions of others, may make them fancy they see Doctrines in a *celebrated Writer*, which are indeed not there. And then, *Self-love* on the one hand, and *Self-conceit* on the other, may easily keep both in their several Delusions, against all the Power of Conviction.

To proceed, The Poet, in the last Place, marks out [from l. 342 to 363] the *Progress* of his *Good Man's* Benevolence, pushed thro' *natural Religion* to *revealed*, 'till it arrives to that Height, which the *Sacred Writers* describe as the very Summit

\* *Commentaire*, p. 332, 333.

of

of *Christian Perfection*: And shews how the Progress of *human* differs from the Progress of *divine* Benevolence. That the *divine* descends from Whole to Parts; but that the *human* must rise from individual to universal. And with this rapturous Description the Subject of the Epistle closes:

*Self-love* thus push'd to social, to divine,  
Gives thee to make thy Neighbour's Blessing thine:  
Is this too little for the boundless Heart?

Extend it, let thy Enemies have Part.

Grasp the whole Worlds of Reason, Life, and  
Sense,

In one close System of Benevolence.

Happier, as kinder! in whate'er Degree,

AND HEIGHT OF BLISS, BUT HEIGHT OF CHA-  
RITY.

God loves from Whole to Parts; but human Soul  
Must rise from Individual to the Whole.

*Self-love* but serves the virtuous Mind to wake,

As the small Pebble stirs the peaceful Lake;

The Centre mov'd, a Circle strait succeeds,

Another still, and still another spreads, &c.

The last Part of the Observation is important. *Roche-focault*, *Esprit*, and their wordy Disciple *Mandeville*, had observed, that *Self-love* was the *Origin* of all those Virtues Mankind most admire; and therefore foolishly supposed it was the *End* likewise: And so, taught that the highest Pretences to Disinterestedness were only the more artful Disguises of *Self-love*. But Mr. *Pope*, who  
says

says, somewhere or other,

Of human Nature Wit its worst may write,  
We all revere it in our own Despite,

saw, as well as they, and every body else, that the Passions began in *Self-love*; yet he understood human Nature better than to imagine they terminated there. He knew that Reason and Religion could convert *Selfishness* into its very opposite; and therefore *teaches* that

*Self-love* but serves the virtuous Mind to wake,  
and thus hath vindicated the Dignity of human Nature, and the philosophic Truth of the Christian Doctrine.

But let us turn once more to Mr. *De Crousaz*, who, constant to himself, concludes, in the same even tenor in which he first set out. "A Man" (says he) must use some Efforts to go even so far as to love his Enemies.—But as to what concerns all Parts of the Universe, and all the living Beings that inhabit it, as well those we see not, as those we do see, we find nothing in ourselves repugnant indeed to the giving them our Love; but then, on the other hand, we do not feel any Motions towards the rendering it to them. And while so great a Number of Objects, with which we are closely surrounded, demand our Attention and Concern, it appears not only superfluous but even irrational, to teaze ourselves with I cannot tell what Kind of Tenderness

“ derness, for the Inhabitants of *Jupiter, &c.*”

This presents him with a pleasant Idea, and he pursues it with his usual Grace and Vivacity.

After this one would scarce think that in the very next Words he should confute himself, answer his own Objections, and vindicate the very Charity he had ridiculed. And yet this he now does, as much without Fear, as the other was without Wit. “ I own (says he) that a Soul devoted  
“ to its Creator, and struck and raised with Admi-  
“ ration at the attentive View of his mere corpo-  
“ real Creation, would be ready to lend those Be-  
“ ings his Voice and Sentiments, in order to join  
“ with them in an Offering of Praise and Thanksgiv-  
“ ing, to their common Creator, whose Glory  
“ they so magnificently declare, tho’ without any  
“ Knowledge of the Truth which they proclaim.  
“ Nay, I go farther, and say, that a Soul so sancti-  
“ fied, and at the same time well assured, that  
“ there are innumerable Choirs of happy In-  
“ telligences, who continually adore their Creator  
“ in extatic Raptures, far surpassing our Concep-  
“ tions, will *congratulate* with them on their Glory  
“ and Felicity.” Here we see described, and to say the Truth, not ill, that very State of Mind which produced the Raptures of our admirable Poet :

Grasp the whole Worlds of Reason, Life, and  
Sense,

In one close System of Benevolence.

<sup>d</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 336.

<sup>e</sup> *Ib.* 337, 338.

Happier,



Happier, as kinder! in whate'er Degree,  
And height of Bliss but height of Charity.

No, says our Critic, who would still keep on foot the Censure he himself has overthrown; the Elevations I speak of, are not *Elevations of Charity for those glorious Intelligences. We are the Objects of their Charity, not they of ours*<sup>f</sup>. Egregious Philosopher! By Charity, Mr. Pope not only means Benevolence, but expressly calls it *so*. And Benevolence surely may be as well exercised towards Superiors, as by them.

But he proceeds, — “ This pretended chimerical Affection can have no Foundation but in the chimerical System of a *Whole*, of which we make a Part, and, of which all the Parts with- Exception, are so dependent on each other, that, if any *one only* be displaced, or never so little deviating from its proper Function, that Disorder will affect the rest, and spread itself over the *Whole*: And, by consequence, extend to us, who make an essential Part of that Whole. *Self-love* therefore, interests itself in every thing that exists and moves.” *Self-love* was never sent on such an Errand, no not by *Rochefoucault* or *Esprit*, tho' they forced it to do all their Drudgery. Here, a Man who never yet once rightly understood what his Adversary did say, will now pretend to guess at his *Reasons for saying*. One might have foreseen with what Success. But something he

<sup>f</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 338.

has

has taught us, and that is, to rest content with the Poet's own Reasoning. His Argument then for this extended Benevolence, is, that as God has made a *Whole*, whose Parts have a perfect Relation to, and an entire Dependency on each other, Man, in extending his Benevolence throughout that *Whole*, acts in Conformity to the Will of his Creator; and therefore, this *Enlargement* of his Affection becomes a *Duty*.

But the Poet hath not only shewn his *Piety* in this *Precept*, but the utmost *Art* and *Address* likewise in the *Disposition* of it. The *Essay on Man*, opens with exposing the Murmurings, and impious Conclusions of foolish Men against the present Constitution of Things. As it proceeds, it occasionally detects all those false Principles and Opinions that led them to conclude thus perversely. Having now done all that was necessary in *Speculation*, the Poet turns to *Practice*; and ends his Essay with the Recommendation of an acknowledged Virtue, *Charity*, which, if exercised in the Extent that Conformity to the Will of God requires, would effectually *prevent* all Complaints against the present Order of Things: Such Complaints being made with a total Disregard to every thing, but their own *private System*; and seeking Remedy in the Disorder, and at the Expence of all the rest.

The Art and Contrivance, we see, is truly admirable. But Mr. *De Croufaz* pursues his own Ideas. For to know Mr. *Pope's* seems to have been his  
least

least Concern throughout his whole *Commentary*.  
 " This System [namely of a *Whole*] will carry us  
 " to a great length. *Miracles*, which deviate from  
 " the ordinary Course of Nature, must pass from  
 " henceforward as idle Fable. [Observe his reason]  
 " It was impossible that any kind of thing  
 " which has happened, should not have happened,  
 " or not have happened in the Manner it hath<sup>a</sup>."  
 As to Mr. *Pope's* Fatalism, we have said enough of  
 that Matter already. But now, if, for Disputation's  
 Sake, we admit what, for Truth's Sake, we must re-  
 ject, according to my Notions of Logic this  
 Conclusion would follow, *that therefore Miracles*  
*could not but have been*; not Mr. *Croufaz's*, *that*  
*therefore they never could be*. Miracles are proved,  
 like other Matters of Fact, by *human Testimony*:  
 If *that* says, Iron at one time swam, at other times  
 sunk, and we suppose Things ordered fatally; these  
 two Events were equally *necessary*: So that to make  
 out his Conclusion, he must be forced to add down-  
 right *Atheism* to his *Fate*.

Mr. *De Croufaz* has now pushed Matters to a  
 decent Length. He has said, the Poet's *Ex-*  
*tent of Charity was irrational*,—*the System on*  
*which it was founded chimerical*—*that it ended in*  
*Fate*—*and overthrew all Miracles*. One would  
 imagine this should have satisfied the most or-  
 thodox Resentment. But there wanted some-  
 thing to make a right polemical Climax. To crown

<sup>a</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 339.

the Whole, therefore, he tells us, that, "According to the Poet, the Universe would not have been a Work sufficiently worthy of God, had there not been Atheists, Superstitious, Persecutors, Tyrants, Idolaters, Assassins, and Poisoners<sup>b</sup>." What I can find in the *Essay* coming nearest to this, is, That those Mischiefs do not deform God's Creation; *because* the divine Art is incessantly producing Good out of Evil: And that as this Universe is the best of all those in God's Idea, therefore, whatever is, is right, with respect to that Universe: Either as tending, *in its own Nature*, to the Perfection of it, or made so to tend by infinite Wisdom, *contrary to its Nature*. The true Consequence drawn from all this, is, *That an Universe with Atheists, Superstitious, &c. is sufficiently worthy of God*. How that can infer this other, *That the Universe would not have been a Work sufficiently worthy of God, had there not been Atheists, Superstitious, &c.* I leave Mr. De Croufaz to draw out by his own *Logic*, or, which seems the more ductile of the two, his own Conscience.

The Poet's Address to his Friend, which follows, and closes this *Epistle*, comes not within the Design of these Observations; which are only to explain the *Philosophy* and *Reasoning* of the *Essay on Man*. Otherwise, this single Apostrophe would furnish a Critic with Examples of every one of those *five* Species of Elocution, from which, as

<sup>b</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 340.

from

Mr. POPE's ESSAY ON MAN. 179  
from its Sources, *Longinus* deduceth the SUB-  
LIME<sup>c</sup>.

1. The first and chief is a *Grandeur and Sub-  
limity of Conception* :

Come then, my Friend! my Geni<sup>us</sup> come along,  
O Master of the Poet, and the Song!  
And while the Muse now stoops, and now ascends,  
To Man's low Passions, or their glorious Ends,

2. The *Second*, that *Pathetic Enthusiasm*, which  
at the same time melts and enflames :

Teach me, like thee, in various Nature wise,  
To fall with Dignity, with Temper rise,  
Form'd by thy Converse, happily to steer  
From grave to gay, from lively to severe,  
Correct with Spirit, eloquent with Ease,  
Intent to reason, or polite to please.

3. A certain elegant *Formation and Ordonance of  
Figures* :

O! while along the Stream of Time, thy Name  
Expanded flies, and gathers all its Fame,  
Say, shall my little Bark attendant fail,  
Pursue the Triumph and partake the Gale?

4. A *splendid Diction* :

<sup>c</sup>— πέντε πηγαί τινές εἰσι τ' ὑψηλότητος. 1. Πρῶτον μὲν  
καὶ κράτιστον τὸ πρὸς τὰς νοήσεις ἀδρεπτήτολον. 2. Δεύτερον ἡ τὸ  
σφοδρὸν καὶ ἐνθουσιαστικὸν πάθος. 3. Ποιὰ τῶν σχημάτων πλά-  
σις. 4. Ἡ γυναιὶ φράσις. 5. Πέμπτη δὲ μεγέθους αἰτία,  
καὶ συγκελεύουσα τὰ πρὸς ἑαυτῆς ἅπαντα, ἢ ἐν ἀξιώματι καὶ  
διάρσει σύνθεσις.

When Statesmen, Heroes, Kings, in Dust repose;  
 Whose Sons shall blush their Fathers were thy  
 Foës,

Shall then this Verse to future Age pretend  
 Thou wert my Guide, Philosopher, and Friend?  
 That, urg'd by thee, I turn'd the tuneful Art,  
 From Sounds to Things, from Fancy to the Heart;  
 For Wit's false Mirror held up Nature's Light;

*And fifthly, which includes in itself all the rest, a  
 Weight and Dignity in the Composition :*

Shew'd erring Pride whatever is, is RIGHT;  
 That REASON, PASSION, answer *one great AIM*;  
 That true SELF-LOVE and SOCIAL are the SAME;  
 That VIRTUE only makes our BLISS below;  
 And all our Knowledge is OURSELVES TO KNOW?

But this, as we say, is not our Province at present. I shall therefore content myself with an Observation, which this sublime Recapitulation of the general Argument, in the last Lines, affords me to conclude with. Which is, of one great Beauty that shines thro' the whole *Essay*. It is this, that the Poet, whether he speaks of Man as an *Individual*, a Member of *Society*, or the Subject of *Happiness*, never misseth an Opportunity, while he is explaining his *State* under any of these Capacities, to illustrate it, in the most artful Manner, by the Inforcement of his grand Principle, *That every thing tends to the Good of the Whole*. From whence his System receives the reciprocal Advantage of having that grand *Theorem* realized by  
*Facts,*

*Facts*, and his *Facts* justified on a *Principle of Right* or Nature.

Thus have I endeavoured to analyse, and explain the noble Reasoning of these four Epistles. Enough I presume to convince our Critic's *Friends* that it hath a Precision, Force, and Closeness of Connection, rarely to be met with, even in the most formal Treatises of Philosophy. Yet in doing this, 'tis but too evident I have destroyed that Grace and Energy which animates the Original. So right was Mr. *Pope's* Prediction of the Event of such an Undertaking, where he says, in his Preface, that, *he was unable to treat this Part of his Subject more in Detail, without becoming dry and tedious.* And now let the Reader believe, if he be so disposed, what our great Logician insinuates to be his own Sentiments, as well as those of his Friends, " That certain Persons have conjectured " that Mr. *Pope* did not compose this *Essay* at once, " and in a regular Order; but that after he had " wrote several Fragments of Poetry, all finished " in their Kind; one, for Example, on the Parallel between *Reason* and *Instinct*; another, " upon Man's groundless *Pride*; another, on the " Prerogatives of *human Nature*; another, on *Religion* and *Superstition*; another, on the *Original of Society*; and several Fragments besides, " on *Self-love* and the *Passions*; he tack'd these " together as he could, and divided them into " four Epistles, as, it is said, was the Fortune of *Homer's*

"Homer's Rhapsodies<sup>f</sup>." Yes, I believe just as much of Mr. *Pope's Rhapsodies*, as I do of *Homer's*. But if this be the Case, that the *Leaves* of these two great Poets were wrote at random, tossed about, and afterwards put in Order, like the *Cumæan* Sibyls; then, what we have till now thought an old lying Bravado of the Poets, *That they wrote by Inspiration*, will become a sober Truth. For, if *Chance* could not produce them, and *human Design* had no hand in them, what must we conclude, but that they are, what they are so commonly called, *Divine*?

However, so honourable an Account of *Rhapsody Writing* should by all means be encouraged, as Matter of Consolation to certain modern Writers in Divinity and Politics. But the Mischief is, our Logician has given us an unlucky Proof in his own Case, that *all Rhapsodists* are not so happy.

To be serious: As to *Homer*, one might hope, by this time, those old exploded Fooleries about his *Rhapsodies*, would be forgotten. But as to his *Translator*, it must be owned, he has given Cause enough of Disgust to our *Philosophers* and *Men of Reason*. Till this time, every Poet, good or bad, stuck fairly to his Profession: But Mr. *Pope*, now the last of the poetic Line amongst us, on whom the large Patrimony of his whole Race is devolved, seems desirous, as is natural in such Cases, to ally himself to a more lasting Family; and so, after having

<sup>f</sup> *Commentaire*, p. 346.

disported



disported himself at Will, in the flowery Paths of Fancy, and revelled in all the Favours of the Muses, boasts of having taken up in time, and courted and espoused *Truth*:

That not in *Fancy's* Maze he wander'd long,  
But stoop'd to *Truth*, and moraliz'd his Song.

But now, in what Light, must we think, will the graver Christian Reader regard the Calumnies we have here confuted? How sad an Idea will this give him of the *present* Spirit of Christian Profession, that a Work, wrote solely to recommend the *Charity* that Religion so strongly inforceth, and breathing nothing but Love to God and universal Good-will to Man, should bring upon the Author such a Storm of uncharitable Bitterness and Calumny, and that, from a pretended Advocate of Christianity? A Religion, the very Vitality of which (if we may believe its Propagators) is Universal Benevolence: *For the End of the Commandment is Charity*<sup>s</sup>. Conformably hereunto we may observe, that in their *Epistles* to the *Churches*, whatever the Occasion was, whatever Discipline they instituted, whatever Points of Faith they explained, whatever Heresies they stigmatized, whatever Immoralities they condemned, or whatever Virtues they recommended, CHARITY was still the Thing most constantly enforced, as the very End of all, *the Bond of Perfection*<sup>h</sup>. The beloved Disciple of

<sup>s</sup> 1 Tim. i. 5.

<sup>h</sup> Col. iii. 14.

our Lord, particularly, who may surely be supposed to know his Master's Will, hath wrote *his* Epistle on set Purpose to recommend this single Virtue: At a Crisis too, when, as Heresies were springing up apace, a *modern Controversialist* would be apt to think he might have employed his Time better. And why (it may be reasonably asked) so very much on *Charity*, in an Age when Christians had so few Provocations or Temptations to violate it? For their Faith being yet chaste from the Prostitutions of the *Schools*, and their Hierarchy yet uncorrupted by the Gifts of *Constantine*, the Church knew neither *Bigotry* nor *Ambition*, the two fatal Sources of uncharitable Zeal. I will tell you, It was the Providence of their prophetic Spirit, which presented to them the Image of those miserable Times foretold by their Master, when *Iniquity should abound, and the Love of many wax cold*<sup>1</sup>. So that if the Men of those Times should persist in violating *this Bond of Perfection*, after so many repeated Admonitions, they might be found altogether without Excuse. For I can by no means enter into the Views of that profound Philosopher, who discovered that *Jesus* and his Followers might preach up Love and Charity, the better to enable a Set of Men, some Centuries afterwards, to tyrannise over those whom the *engaging Sounds of Charity and Brotherly Love* had intrapped into Subjection<sup>k</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Mat. xxiv. 12.  
vol. iii. p. 115. Ed. 1737.

<sup>k</sup> Characteristicks, vol. i. p. 87.

I am

I am aware that certain modern Propagators of the Faith, aided with a *School Distinction*, will tell you, that it is pure Charity which sets them all at work; and that what you call *Uncharitableness*, when they insult the Fame, the Fortune, or the Person of their Brother, is indeed the very Height of Charity, a Charity for his *Soul*. This indeed may be the Height of the Hangman's Charity, who waits for your Cloaths: But it could never be St. Paul's. His was *not easily provoked, thought no Evil, bore all Things, hoped all Things, endured all Things*<sup>1</sup>. It was a Charity that begun in Candour, inspired good Opinion, and sought the temporal Happiness of his Brother.

I leave it with Mr. *De Croufaz* to think upon the different Effects which Excess of Zeal in the Service of Religion, hath produced in him. For I will, in very *Charity*, believe it to be really *that*; notwithstanding we every Day see the most despicable Tools of *others Impotency*, and the vilest Slaves to their *own Ambition*, hide their corrupt Passions under the self-same Cover. This learned Gentleman should reflect on what the sober Part of the World will think of his Conduct. For tho' the Apostle bids AGED MEN BE SOUND IN FAITH, he adds immediately, and IN CHARITY, IN PATIENCE<sup>m</sup> likewise. But where was his *Charity* in labouring, on the slightest Grounds, to represent his Brother as propagating *Spinozism* and

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 5, 7.

<sup>m</sup> Titus ii. 2.

O Immo-

Immorality? Where was his *Temper*, when he became so furious against him, on the Supposition of his espousing a *System* he had *never read*, that of *Leibnitz*; and justifying a Doctrine he had *never heard of*, the *pre-established Harmony*? Where was his *Patience*, when, having conceived this of him, on the mere Authority of a *most mistaken Translator*, he would not stay to inquire whether the Author owned the Faithfulness of the Version; but published his Conceptions, and the strongest Accusations upon those Conceptions, in Volume after Volume, to the whole World? Where; if in any of these Imaginations so founded, he should be mistaken, he became guilty of a deliberate and repeated Act of the highest Injustice; the attempting to deprive a virtuous Man of his honest Reputation.

If Mr. *De Croufatz* presumes his Zeal for the Honour of God will excuse his Violations of Charity towards Men, I must tell him, *he knows not what Spirit he is of*. If a Man (says the beloved Disciple of our Lord) say, *I love God, and hateth his Brother, he is a Liar: For he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen*<sup>a</sup>. A Free-thinker may perhaps laugh at the Simplicity of this Argument, which yet he would affect to admire, could any one find it for him in *Plato*. But let him for once

<sup>a</sup> 1 John iv. 20.

condescend

condescend to be instructed by his *Bible*, and hearken to a little *Christian Reasoning*.

“ You say, you *love God* (says the Apostle) tho’  
 “ you hate your Brother : Impossible ! The Love  
 “ of any Object begins originally, like all the other  
 “ Passions, from Self-love. Thus we love our-  
 “ selves, by Representation, in our Offspring ;  
 “ which Love extends by degrees to our remoter  
 “ Relations, and so on thro’ our Neighbourhood,  
 “ to all the Fellow-Members of our Community.  
 “ And now Self-love, refined by Reason and Re-  
 “ ligion, begins to lose its Nature, and deservedly  
 “ assumes another Name. Our Country next  
 “ claims our Love ; we then extend it to all  
 “ Mankind, and never rest till we have, at length,  
 “ fixed it on that *most amiable* of all Objects, the  
 “ great Author and Original of Being. This is the  
 “ Course and Progress of human Love :

God loves from Whole to Parts, but human Soul  
 Must rise from Individual to the Whole.

Now (pursues the Apostle) I reason thus : “ Can  
 “ you, who are not yet arrived at that inferior  
 “ Stage of Benevolence, the Love of your Bro-  
 “ ther, *whom you have seen*, that is, whom the  
 “ Necessities of Civil Life, and a Sense of your  
 “ mutual Relation might teach you to love, pre-  
 “ tend to have reached the very Height and Per-  
 “ fection of this Passion, the Love of God *whom*  
 “ *you have not seen* ? that is, *whose* wonderful Oe-  
 “ conomy in his System of Creation, which makes  
 “ him

“ him so amiable, you cannot have the least Con-  
 “ ception of; *you*, who have not yet learnt that  
 “ your own private System is supported on the  
 “ great Principle of Benevolence? *Fear* him, *flat-*  
 “ *ter* him, *fight* for him, as you dread his *Power*,  
 “ you may; but to *love* him, as you know not  
 “ his *Nature*, is impossible.” This is the Apostle’s  
 grand and sublime Reasoning; and it is with the  
 same Thought on which the Apostle founds his  
 Argument that our moral Poet ends his Essay, as  
 the just and necessary Conclusion of his Work:

*Self-love* but serves the virtuous Mind to *wake*,  
 As the small Pebble stirs the peaceful Lake;  
 The Centre mov’d, a Circle strait succeeds,  
 Another still, and still another spreads;  
*Friend, Parent, Neighbour*, first it will embrace,  
 His *Country* next, and next, *all human Race*;  
 Wide, and more wide, th’ O’erflowings of the  
 Mind  
 Take ev’ry Creature in, of ev’ry Kind;  
*Earth* smiles around, with boundless Bounty blest,  
 AND HEAV’N BEHOLDS ITS IMAGE IN HIS  
 BREAST.

F I N I S.









